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Chatsworth Peak Study

VENTURA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

VENTURA COUNTY

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY

PLANNING DIVISION

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CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY

VENTURA COUNTY
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY
PLANNING DIVISION

JULY 20, 1984



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SUMMARY

The purpose of this Study is to aid the Board of Supervisors in deciding whether to change land use policies for the Chatsworth Peak Area. The Study was conducted by direction of the Board of Supervisors as a preliminary study to a possible land use study and specific plan for the area.

The Chatsworth Peak Study Area is a small and largely undeveloped rural area in the extreme eastern part of Ventura County, yet with a strong visual, access, and service orientation to Los Angeles County. The Study Area is approximately 1,465 acres in size and consists of rugged, steep terrain with four identifiable enclaves of development existing within the Study boundaries.

Approximately 1,084 parcels of land exist within the Study Area. Of these approximately 265 are developed with single-family residences. A maximum of 117 additional parcels could be created through subdivision based on existing ownership patterns. However, the great majority of this subdividable land is located in rugged mountainous areas without access or services.

Constraints to development vary by sub-area; however, several constraints occur over the entire Study Area. These areawide constraints include: topography (steep slopes); geology (fractured bedrock without adequate soil mantle, density of bedrock may require blasting for grading of lots and roads); soils (lack of depth of soil to adequately filter sewage effluent from individual sewage disposal systems); fire service (inadequate access for emergency vehicles, exposure of additional structures to wildland fire); water service (existing facilities are capable of serving only minor in-fill); public sanitary sewer (lack of public sanitary sewers in the area and the expense of installation); and roads (access to developed areas is provided by substandard roads).

In addition, the following constraints occur specifically in the individual sub-areas:

Box Canyon Community - the great majority of the developable portions of this area are developed.

Chatsworth Lake Manor Subdivision - the great majority of the developable portions of this area are developed; water flows in the Webb Road area do not meet Fire Department standards. Surveying conflicts due to inaccurately placed, or unlocatable monuments, are common.

Studio Road - many of the parcels in this area have been illegally subdivided which clouds title and does not allow for further subdivision. The County Land Use Element and Open Space Element are not consistent in this area. The Open Space Element, being more restrictive, applies. Surveying conflicts due to inaccurately placed, or unlocatable monuments, are common.

Lilac Lane Area - the great majority of the developable portions of this area are developed. The County Land Use Element and Open Space Element are not consistent in this area. The Open Space Element, being more restrictive, applies.

The Study concludes that a change in the General Plan to increase land use densities in the Study Area is not appropriate.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

This report was prepared pursuant to direction given by the Board of Supervisors on November 22, 1983 calling for a study of the Box Canyon/Chatsworth Peak Area, hereafter referred to as the Chatsworth Peak Study Area or Study Area. This Study is a preliminary study to a possible land use study and specific plan for the Chatsworth Peak Area.

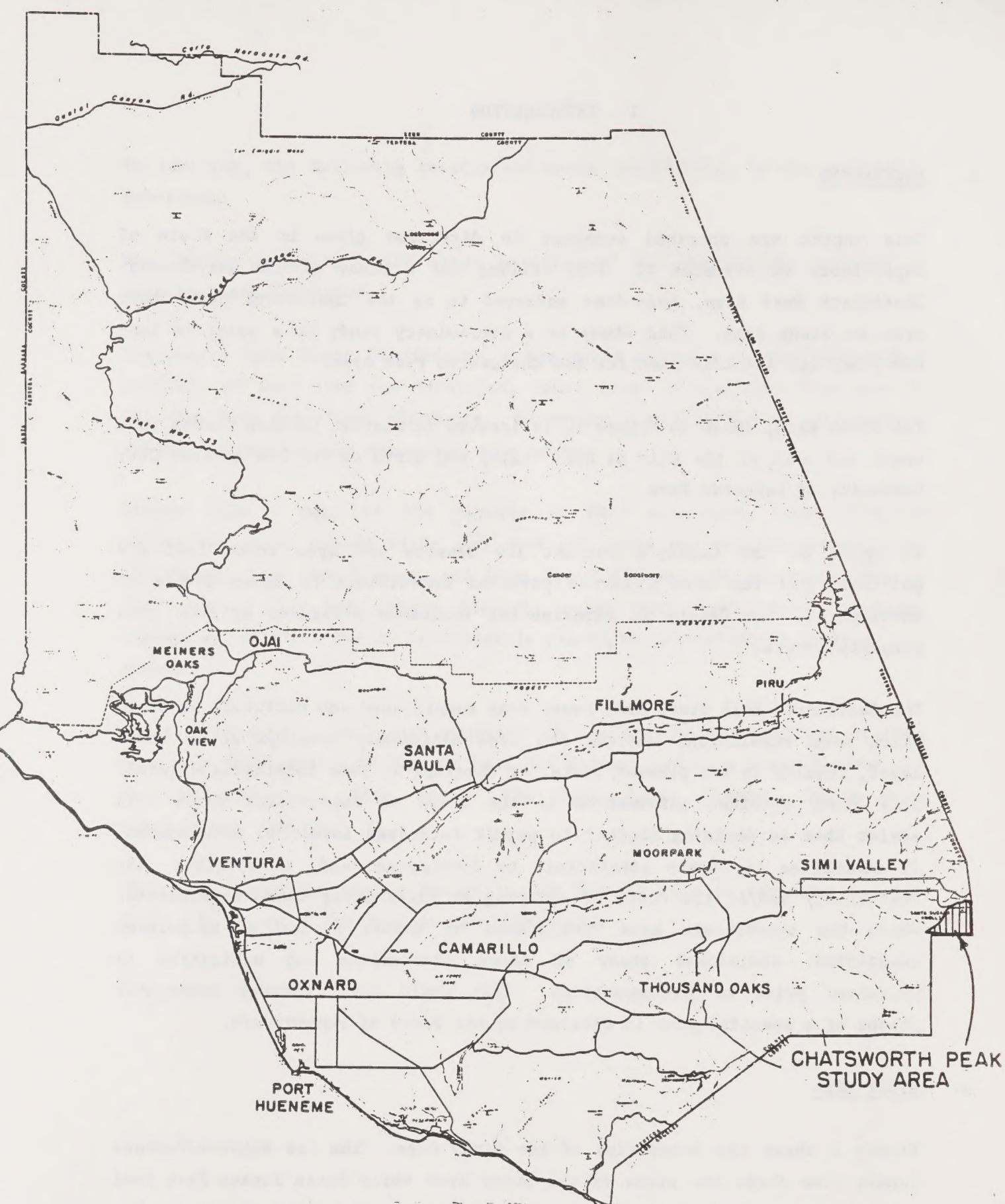
The Study Area, shown in Figure 1, is located in eastern Ventura County just south and east of the City of Simi Valley and north of the Los Angeles City Community of Lakeside Park.

In spite of the County's current low density and open space land use policies, and the area's severe physical constraints to urban levels of development, the County is experiencing increased pressures by some area property owners.

The Chatsworth Peak Study Area poses some complicated and difficult problems which need resolution, whether the area ultimately develops at an urban level, remains in its present state, or develops at some intermediate level. This Study provides information to the Board of Supervisors which will assist them in deciding whether to permit increased levels of development. It identifies the known constraints to development and, if possible, the feasibility and/or the costs of reducing or eliminating those constraints. Where the constraints have complicated or costly mitigation techniques identified, additional study of those constraints and mitigation is warranted prior to implementation. This would occur through subsequent phases of a specific plan if directed by the Board of Supervisors.

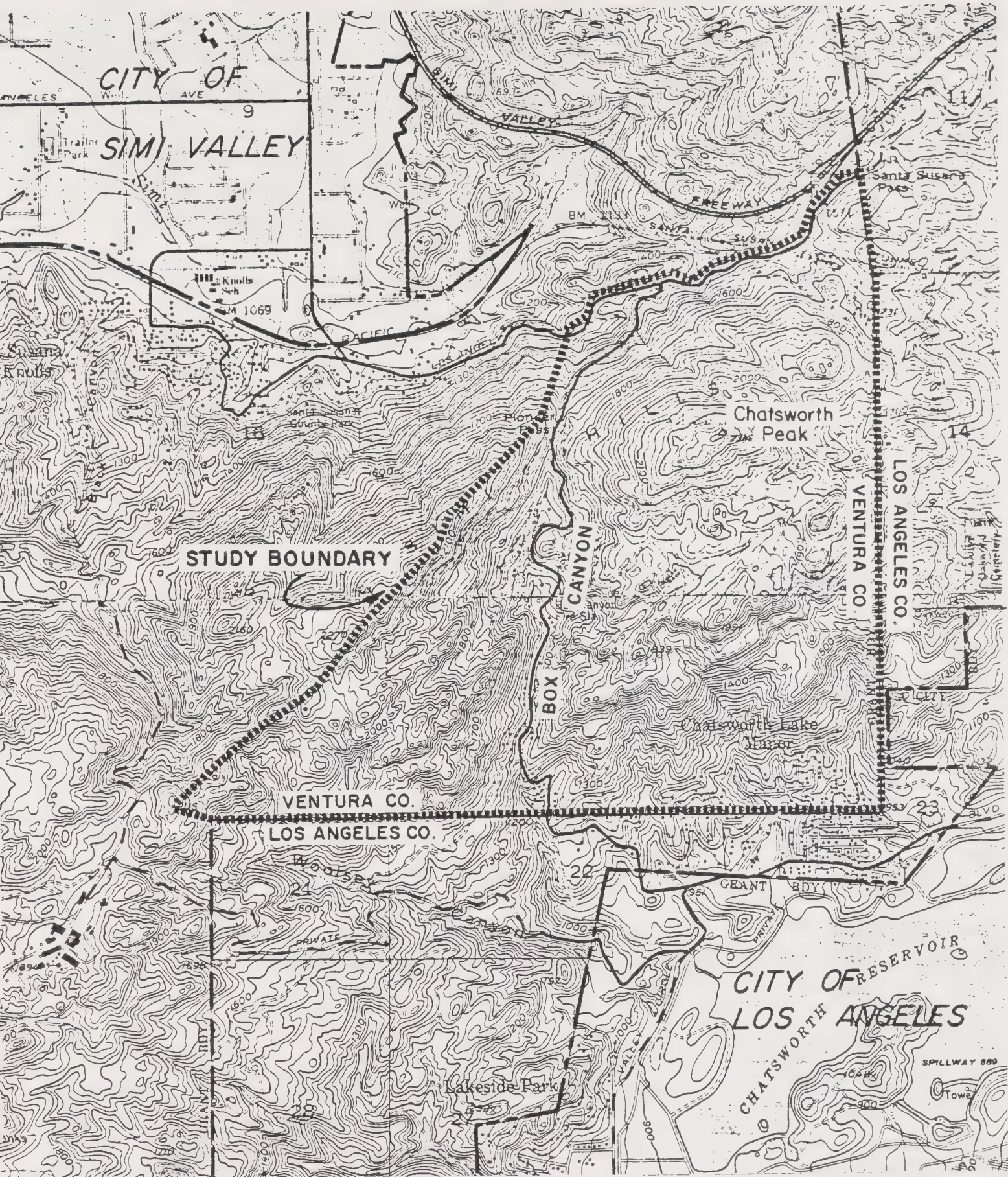
B. STUDY AREA

Figure 2 shows the boundaries of the Study Area. The Los Angeles/Ventura County line forms two sides of the Study Area while Santa Susana Pass Road and a northeast/southwest trending ridgeline forms the third boundary, thus creating a triangular shaped area.



CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY AREA





CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY AREA



The Chatsworth Peak Area is comprised generally of open, rugged, rocky terrain much affected by uplifting, weathering, and erosion.

Several areas within the Study Area are developed or have begun to develop with single-family homes. These areas include:

- o The Box Canyon Community Area located adjacent to Box Canyon Road south of Pioneer Pass;
- o The Chatsworth Lake Manor subdivision located in the southeast portion of the Study Area; and
- o The Lilac Lane Area located in the northeast portion of the Study Area.

Sporadic development exists throughout the remainder of the Study Area.

C. STUDY METHODOLOGY

The list of issues discussed in this Study evolved from various sources. Past attempts at development by property owners, site investigations by County personnel, and construction difficulties encountered during development account for most of the issues. Also contributing to the list are the inherent physical limitations of this type of land (topography, geology, and geographical orientation), the existing patterns of infrastructure, and the organization of service agencies.

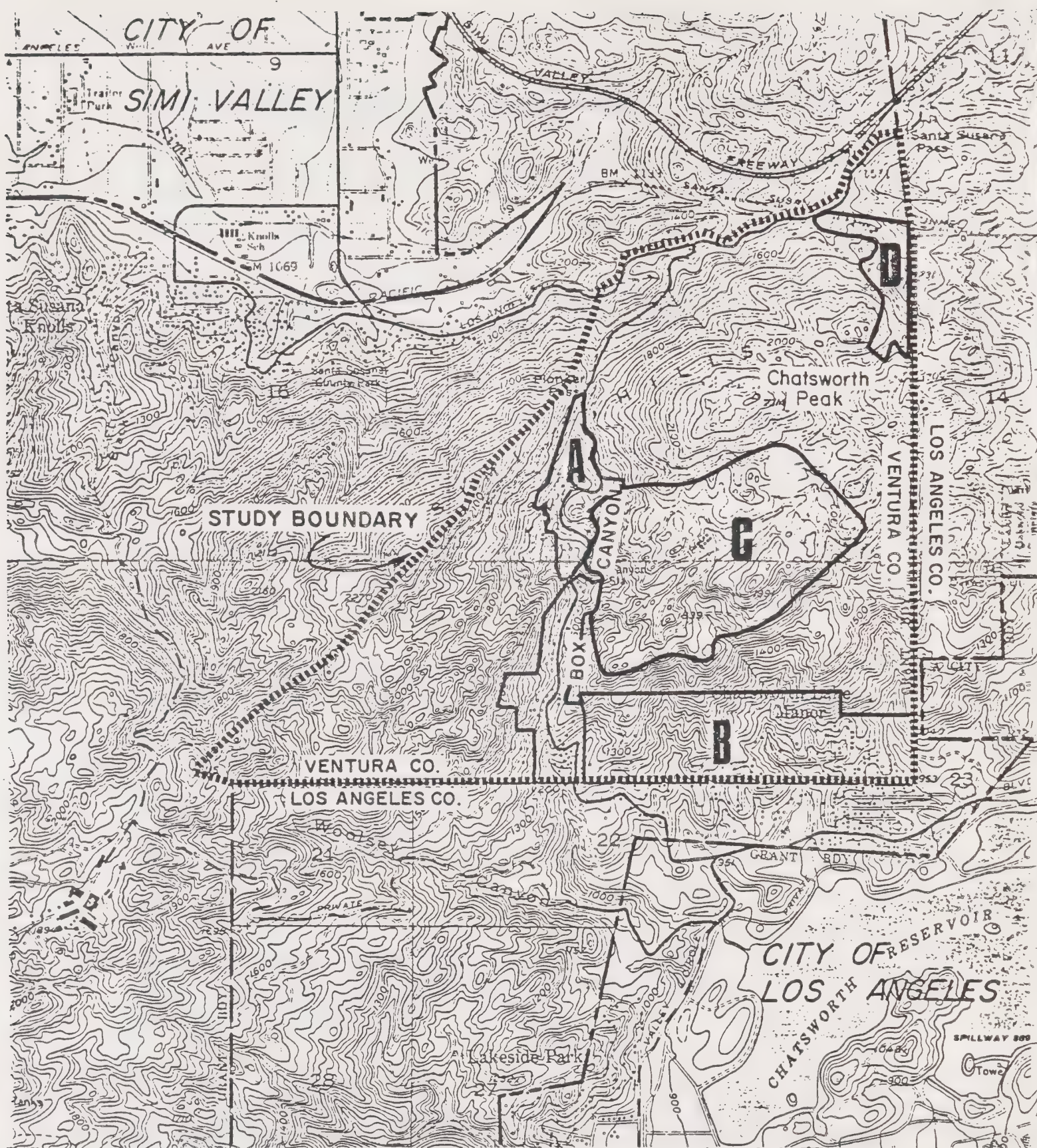
Based on direction from the Board of Supervisors, a written assessment of the development constraints was prepared. Those written assessments comprise this Study. The development constraints assessed for the Study are as follows:

1. Topographic constraints; including a discussion of constraints to construction of new roads, new housing, and infrastructure (Public Works);

2. Seismic and geologic hazards to new development (Public Works);
3. Flooding hazards and drainage constraints (Public Works);
4. Septic system constraints (Environmental Health Division);
5. Sewer system constraints (Planning Division with assistance from Public Works, the City of Los Angeles, and the Las Virgines Municipal Water District).
6. Water system constraints; including a discussion of water supply and fire suppression (Planning Division with assistance from Water Works District No. 8 and the Fire District);
7. Road access constraints; including a discussion of road improvement, providing access to buildable sites, and road access related to fire hazard (Public Works with assistance from the Fire District);
8. Land use and ownership patterns; including mergers and illegal lots (Planning Division with assistance from the Survey and Mapping Division of Public Works);

Because the Study Area has varied problems, some of which are unique to only one or two portions of the area, the Study also addresses specific sub-areas, in order to isolate and facilitate logical discussion of the issues. Figure 3 indicates those sub-areas:

- o The Box Canyon Area contains the Box Canyon Rural Community as defined in the recently adopted Conservation and Open Space Element to the County's General Plan (see Appendix A). This "Community" is located along both sides of Box Canyon Road.
- o The Chatsworth Lake Manor Area include the subdivisions located in the southeastern portion of the study area along the Los Angeles/Ventura County line.



SUB AREA MAP

- A** - BOX CANYON COMMUNITY
- B** - CHATSWORTH LAKE MANOR SUBDIVISION
- C** - STUDIO ROAD AREA
- D** LILAC LANE AREA

SOURCE: VENTURA COUNTY PLANNING DIVISION, JAN. 1984

CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY AREA



SCALE 1" = 2000'

- o The Studio Road area encompasses approximately 60 acres of land along Studio Road and a dirt extension of Studio Road in the central portion of the Study Area.
- o The Lilac Lane Area consists of the land along Lilac Lane in the northeastern part of the Study Area.

Throughout the Report these areas (as shown on Figure 3) are referred to by name.

The remainder of Study Area encompasses all land within the Study Area not included in the above categories.

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II. EXISTING CONDITIONS, CONSTRAINTS, AND POSSIBLE MITIGATION

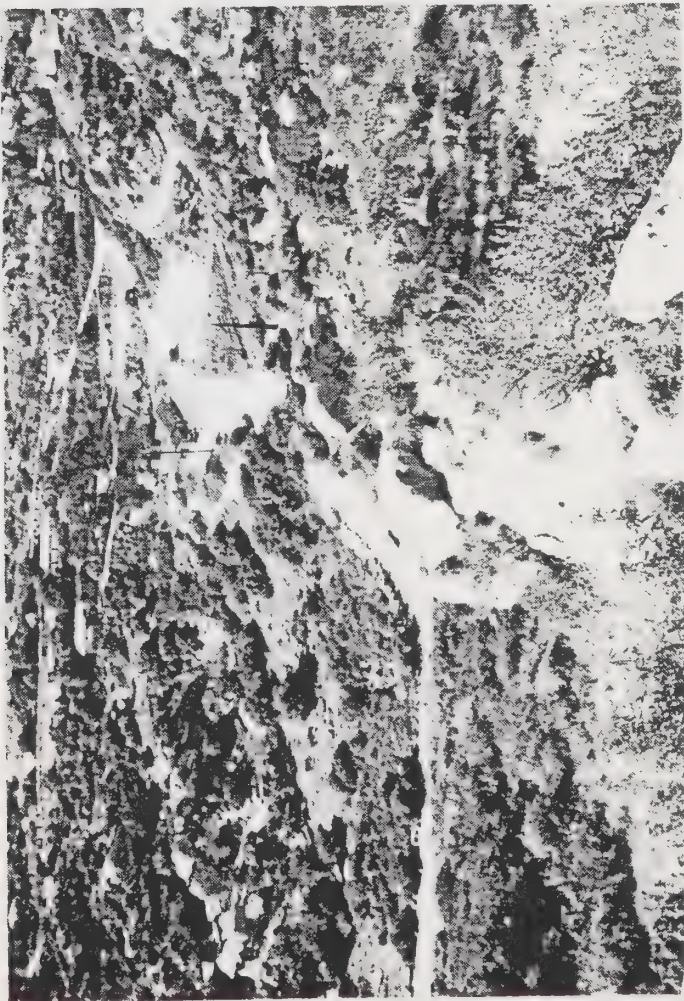
A. GENERAL PROFILE AND HISTORY

1. Area Description

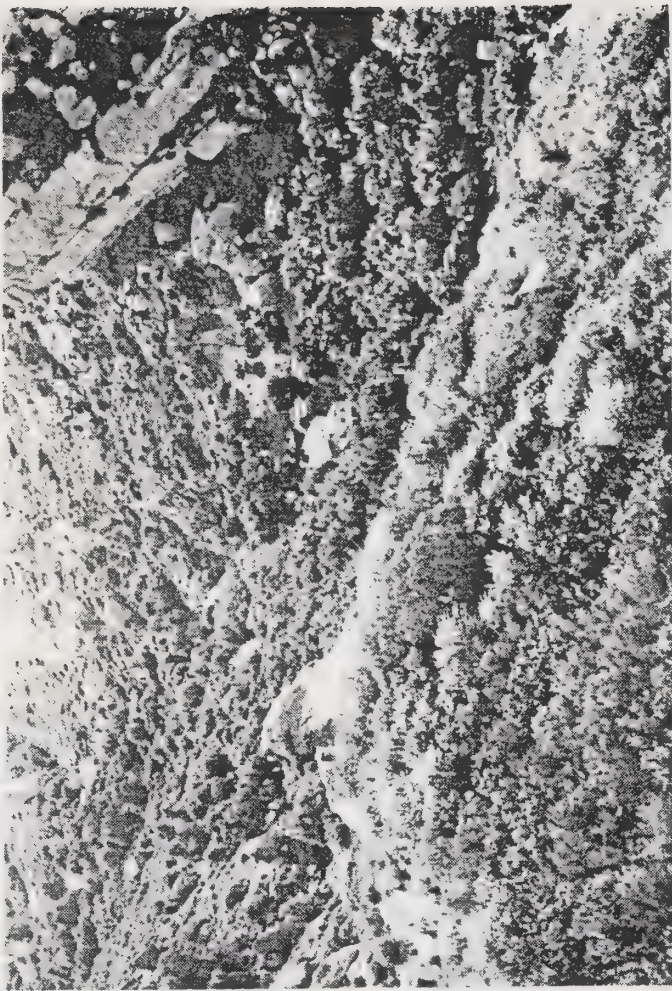
The Chatsworth Peak Study Area located, in the extreme eastern portion of the County, is a rugged, largely undeveloped area consisting of 1465 acres. The area is located in the unincorporated portion of Ventura County southeast of the incorporated City of Simi Valley. Located to the south is the City of Los Angeles, with a narrow intervening strip of unincorporated Los Angeles County land separating the Study Area from Los Angeles City (see Figure 2). To the west exists undeveloped, rugged land located in Ventura County. To the east the land located in Los Angeles County slopes downward to the San Fernando Valley and to the north, undeveloped rugged land located in Ventura County is traversed by the Simi Valley-San Fernando Valley Freeway. The Southern Pacific Railroad's Santa Susana Tunnel crosses under the extreme northern portion of the site.

Relief in the Study Area ranges from an elevation of 950 feet in the Chatsworth Lake Manor subdivision area to 2314 feet at Chatsworth Peak. The topography is generally very steep and rocky. Rock outcroppings of very large boulders to small boulders are characteristics (see Figure 4a, b and c). Vegetation throughout the undeveloped portions of the site is primarily chaparral.

The population within the Study Area is estimated¹ to be 586. There are approximately 265 dwelling units (all single-family detached or mobilehomes), 245 of which are occupied. This averages out to be 2.39 persons per dwelling unit.



Box Canyon Road From Studio Road Looking North



Box Canyon Road (covered by trees) From Studio Road Looking South

Box Canyon Road From Pioneer Pass Looking South

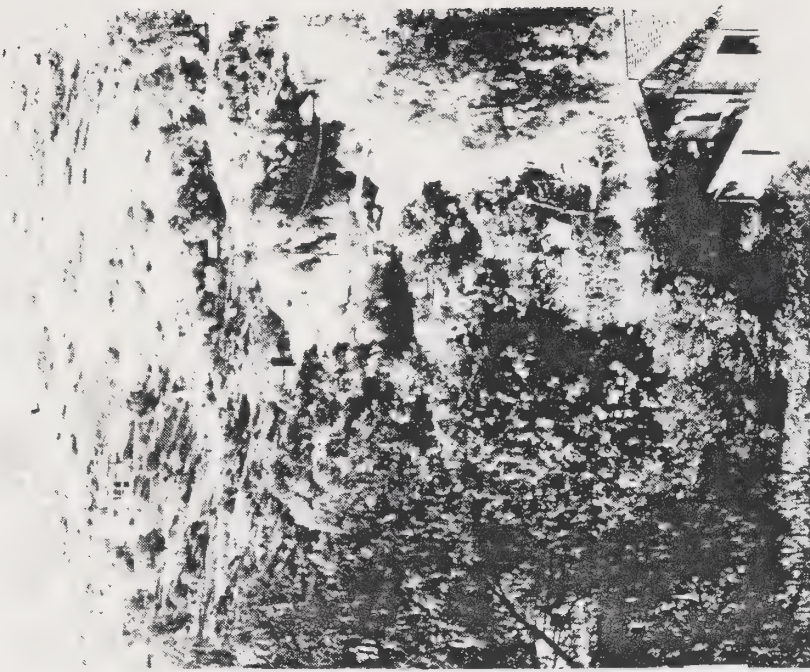


SOURCE: VENTURA COUNTY RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT AGENCY MARCH 1984



Typical Access

Chatsworth Area From Thompson Avenue Looking West



Chatsworth Area From Studio Road Looking South



SOURCE: VENTURA COUNTY RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT AGENCY MARCH 1984

Portion of Studio Road Looking East



Studio Road Area

Movie Studio - Looking West



Studio Road Area Looking South



SOURCE: VENTURA COUNTY RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT AGENCY MARCH 1984

The population and dwelling units by sub-area and a brief description (see Figure 3) are as follows:

<u>Sub-Area</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Dwelling Units*</u>
Box Canyon	177	80
Chats-Lake Manor	244	110
Studio Road	35	16
Lilac Lane	66	30
Remainder	64	29
TOTAL	586	265

*20 units unoccupied resulting in a 7.5% vacancy rate for the Study Area

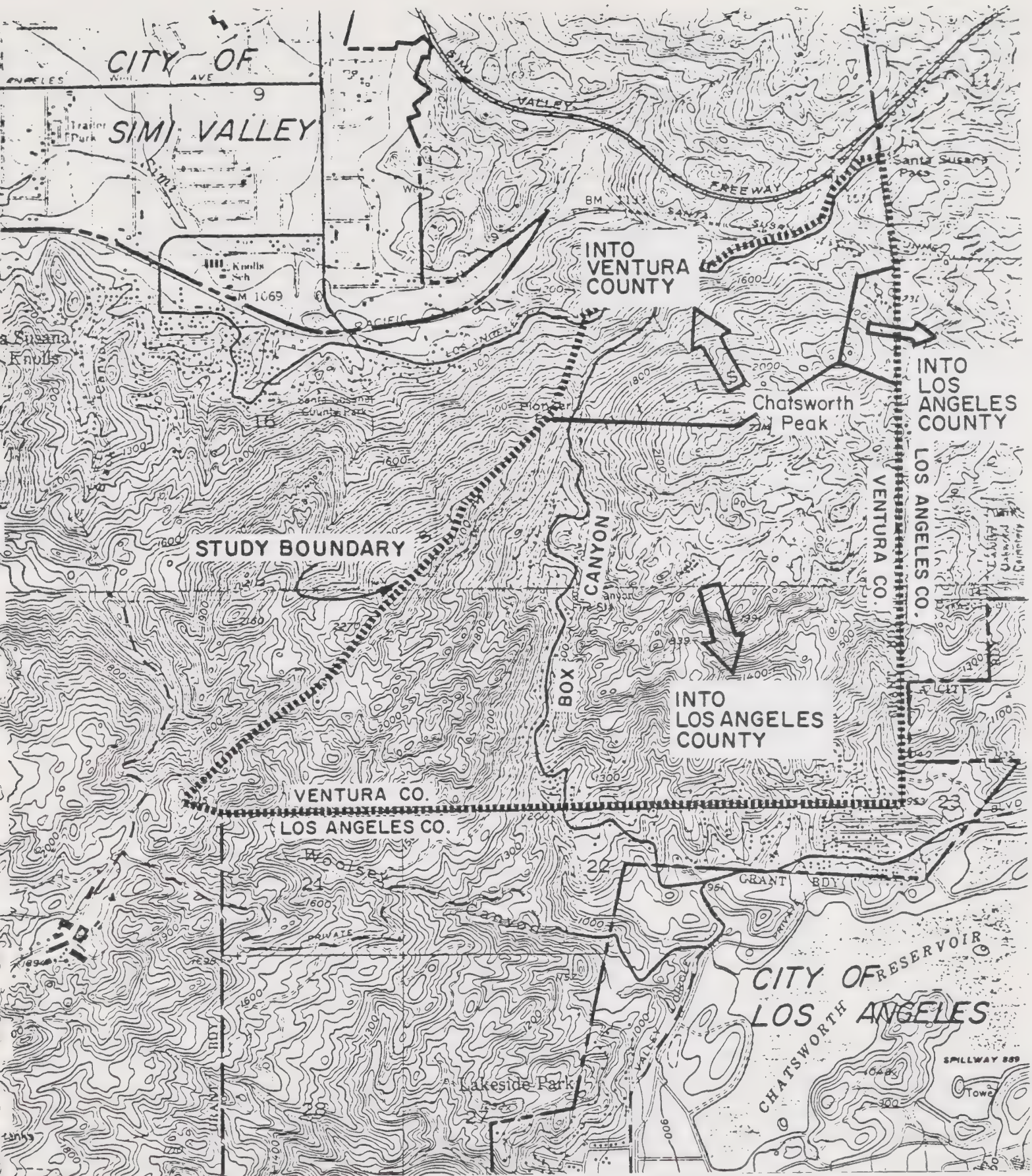
- o Developed portions of the Box Canyon Area consist principally of single family homes (some lots containing more than one house). Most homes are built along Box Canyon Road, many with very small setbacks, as buildable pads are located along private roads stemming from Box Canyon Road.
- o The Chatsworth Lake Manor Area consists of sporadic development (principally single family homes and mobilehomes) clustered along private roads. Most of these roads are not built within their easements due to topographic constraints. The access roads are generally sub-standard in design and poorly maintained.
- o The Studio Road Area is developed sporadically with single family homes on mixed lot sizes. This area is the only area which contains a significant amount of gentle topography for development purposes.

- o The Lilac Lane Area is developed with single family homes most of which are built close to the street. Topography in this area is generally severe and most buildable lots are developed.

The great majority of the Chatsworth Peak Study Area is in a watershed which drains into Los Angeles County. Approximately 80% of the study area acreage is within this watershed (see Figure 5). The great majority of development is also within this watershed. The exceptions involve 3 or 4 isolated dwelling units. Major access to the Study Area is through Los Angeles County via Box Canyon Road and Lake Manor Drive, and via Box Canyon Road from the Simi Valley area.

The Study Area was originally part of the original land grant to the Mexican Governor of California, Pio Pico. It is believed that the area was part of the development boom of the 1870's. From the 1870's through the mid 1920's, only minor land transactions and street improvements occurred. A frantic period of activity began in 1926, which resulted in the recording of most of the lots within the tracts located in the Study Area. The originally recorded tracts contained lots with dimensions of 75 ft. x 75 ft. or 75 ft. x 100 ft. In June of 1927, the County Assessor filed an Official Map with the County Recorder which divided the original lots into the smaller Assessor's parcels measuring either 25 ft. x 75 ft. or 25 ft. x 100 ft. While this was done for assessment purposes, it had the effect of a land division, since the owners of the parcels could sell the smaller Assessor lots at the rate of one per year without being considered a subdivider.

Many of the subdivisions were created without consideration for topographic constraints, with traffic access based on very narrow easements (20 ft.) for roads. Most of the graded roads within the Study Area are not located within their easements.



WATER SHED MAP

➔ DRAINAGE AREAS

CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY AREA



SCALE 1" = 2000'

Figure 5

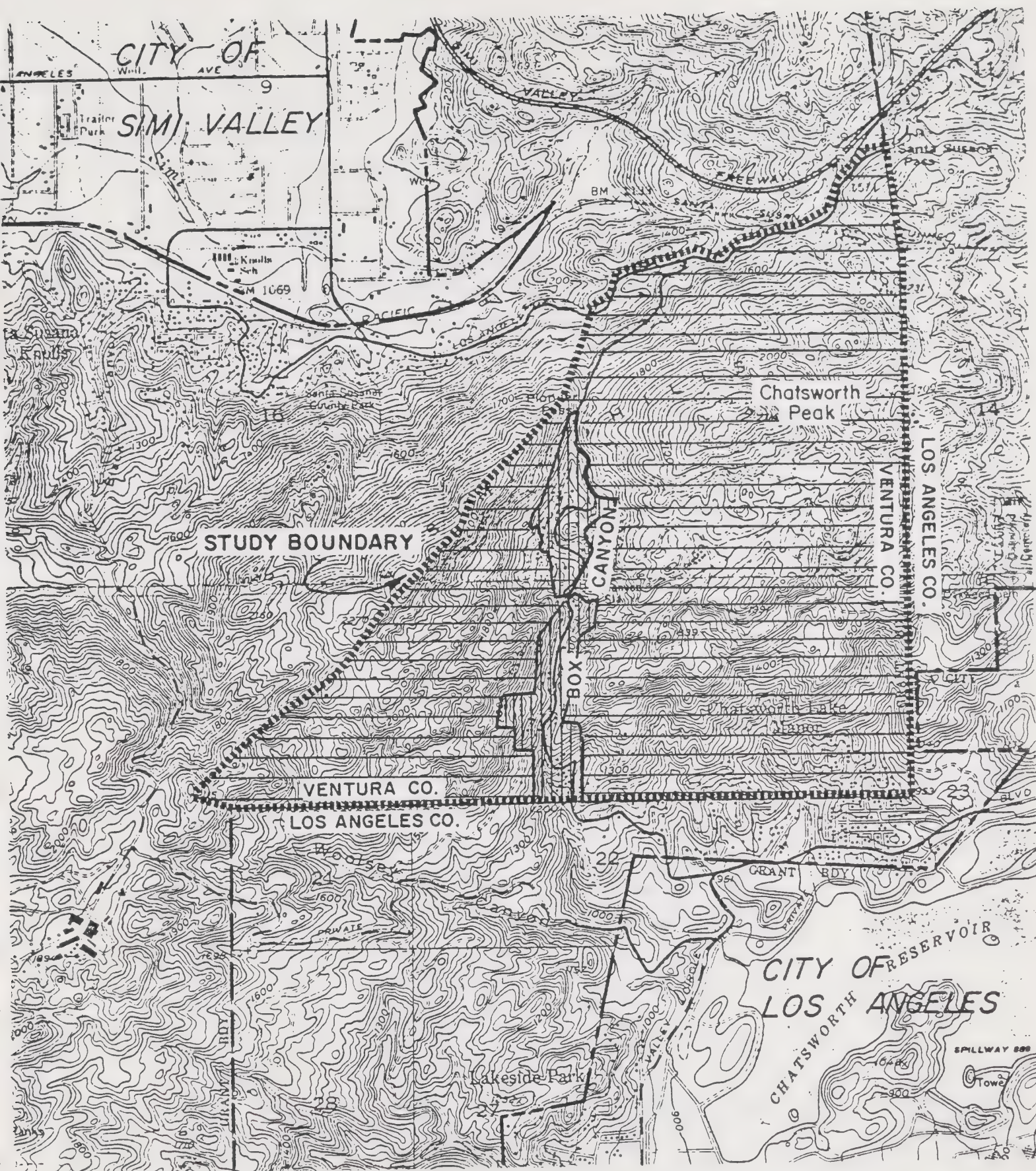
At various times the County became the owner of many of these lots through tax delinquency. The lots so obtained were subsequently sold at auctions by the County. The County, at the time of auction, distributes and reads the "Terms of sale" and the applicable Ordinance Code section of "Use of nonconforming lots."²

The terms of sale of property at tax auctions (Appendix B) states "The County of Ventura makes no guarantee, expressed or implied, relative to title, location or condition of the lots or parcels for sale nor for a clearance by the County Planning Department, pursuant to Section 8162-7 (8113-9 after September 27, 1983), Ventura County Ordinance Code (Zoning Ordinance - Recodified after September 27, 1983) regulating the use of non-conforming lots."



2. Land Use

The Open Space Element of the County General Plan designates the majority of the Study Area as "Open Space" (1 dwelling unit per 10 acres +). The only exception to this is the "Box Canyon Rural Community" (see Figure 6), which includes developed properties along both sides of Box Canyon Road from the Ventura/Los Angeles County lines north to Pioneer Pass. A Rural Community designation effectively recognizes existing land use and development patterns and allows continued development of the area in accordance with those patterns and intensities.

The Study Area falls within the City of Simi Valley Sphere of Interest. Simi Valley's General Plan (which the County has subsequently adopted as its land use element for the area) calls for "Open Space" (40 Acre Minimum) over most of the area, with the Box Canyon and Lilac Lane areas having a residential designation which calls for a density of up to 3.0 units per acre (14,250 square foot lots). The Studio Road area has a "Residential Estate" designation which calls for a one acre minimum lot size. The 3.0 DU per acre designation for Lilac Lane and the 1.0 DU per



VENTURA COUNTY OPEN SPACE PLAN

-  BOX CANYON RURAL COMMUNITY (SEE APPENDIX)
-  OPEN SPACE (10 Ac.+) 18

SOURCE: VENTURA COUNTY PLANNING DIVISION JAN. 1984

CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY AREA



SCALE 1" = 2000'

Figure 6

acre designation for the Studio Road area conflict with the Ventura County Open Space Plan (10+ Acre Minimum Lot Size) for this area. The Open Space Plan (10+ Acre Minimum Lot Size) is the more restrictive of the two and, therefore, would govern. Additionally a "Special Purpose Park" designation is shown along Box Canyon Road near its intersection with Studio Road (see Figure 7). The 6 acre park site is undeveloped and is owned by the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. The district has no immediate plans for development.

Ventura County Zoning regulations govern the zoning of the area. With the exception of the Box Canyon area, the zoning is not consistent with the General Plan for the Study Area. This area will be rezoned to be consistent with the Open Space Element during the Rezoning Program scheduled to begin in July, 1984.

The existing County zoning in the area includes:

- o Box Canyon Rd. (entire "Rural Community"): R-E-20 (20,000 square foot minimum lot size), R-E-1AC (1 acre minimum lot size)
- o Chatsworth Lake Manor Subdivision Area: R-E-20, R-E-1Ac
- o Area above Chatsworth Lake Manor Subdivision: R-A-5Ac (5 acre minimum lot size), R-P-D-2U (Residential Planned Development, 2 units per acre)
- o Lilac Lane Area: R-1, R-E-1Ac
- o Studio Rd. Area: R-E-1Ac
- o Western portion of Study Area: R-E-20, R-E-1Ac



Recent development activity (since 1980) is limited to construction of single family homes. Nine building completions have been recorded since April 1980: Four in the Chatsworth Lake Manor subdivision; one in the Studio Road Area; and four in the Lilac Lane Area. Eight of these homes were completed prior to December 31, 1982 and one was completed in July 1983. Several homes were destroyed in a 1981 fire which swept through the area.

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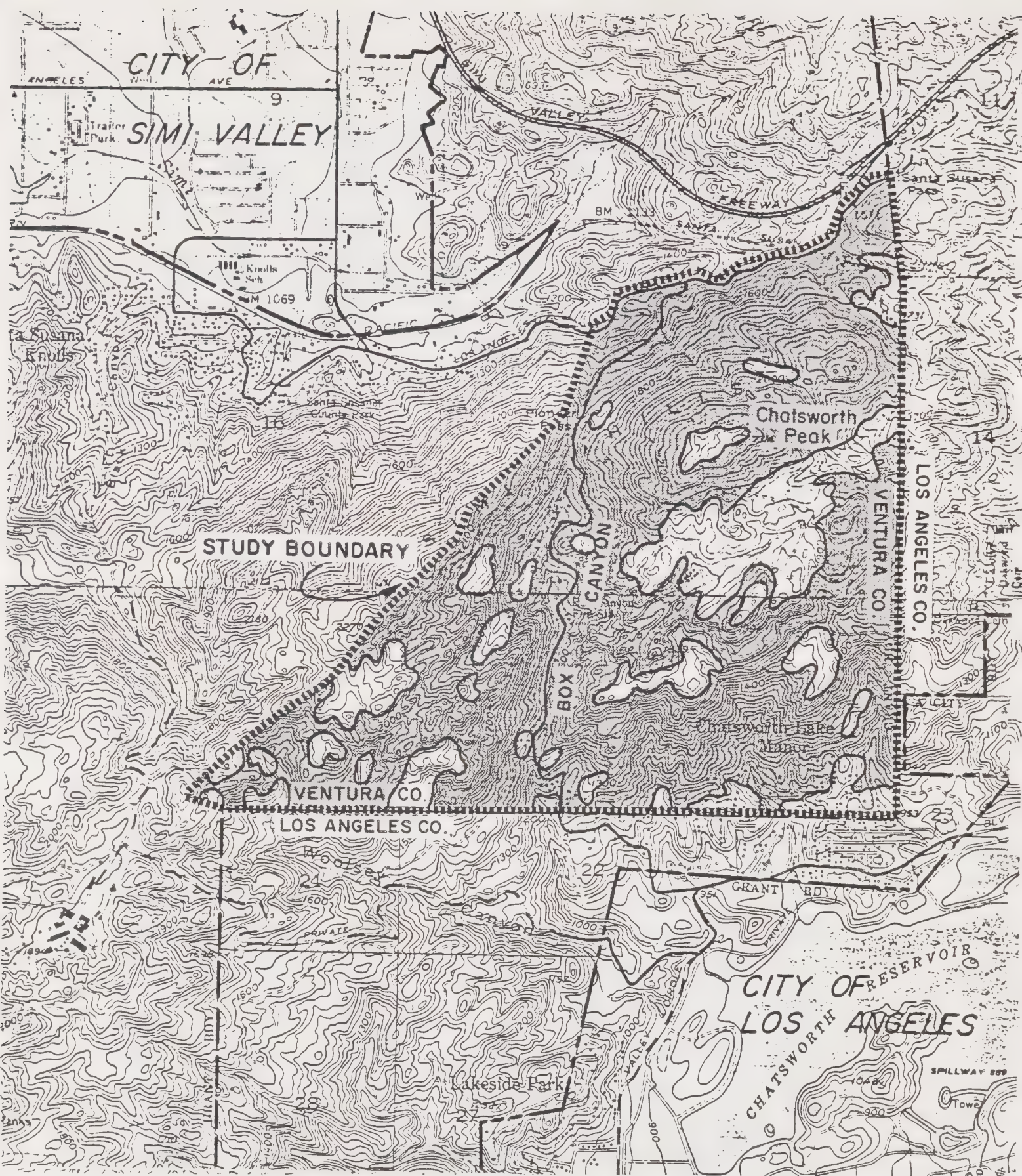
B. DISCUSSION OF PHYSICAL FEATURES

1. Topography

Figure 8 is a generalized slope analysis map for the Study Area. The County Planning Division has prepared a detailed slope analysis map which will be kept on file in the Planning Division and can be reviewed when requested. The detailed map shows the allocation of the Study Area acreage into slope categories as follows:

<u>Slope Category</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Percentage of Area</u>
0 - 15%	149.3	10.3
15 - 25%	124	8.5
25% and steeper	1170.8	79.8
Roads	<u>20.9</u>	<u>1.4</u>
TOTAL	1465	100

The topography throughout the entire Study Area is very rugged and steep. The photos in Figure 4a, b, and c provide the reader with a perspective on the type of terrain comprising the area. Relief differential throughout the Study Area is greater than 1300 feet from Chatsworth Peak to the low point located in the Chatsworth Lake Manor subdivision. Slopes exceed 25% in gradient for more than three-quarters of the Study Area, with many slopes approaching verticality. Consequently, these slopes are generally uneconomical and/or physically impractical to grade and develop in conformance to Ventura County Ordinance. Portions of the Study Area with slope gradients less than 25% are isolated on knolls bounded by steep slopes making access difficult or impossible. Development in areas of greater than 25% in steepness increases the potential for slope instability and erosion. In addition, this type of development would result in a significant amount of grading for each proposed lot and roadway.



GENERALIZED SLOPE ANALYSIS

-  SLOPE (GREATER THAN 25%)
-  SLOPE (LESS THAN 25%)

23

SOURCE: VENTURA COUNTY PLANNING DIVISION JAN. 1984

CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY AREA



SCALE 1" = 2000'

Figure 8

The remaining areas within the Study Area suitable in slope for some type of development comprise less than 20% of the Study Area acreage. These areas include: the area along Box Canyon Road; the area along Lilac Lane; the area along Studio Road; and portions of the Chatsworth Lake Manor Area.

Along Box Canyon Road there exist small, relatively steep sloping areas immediately adjacent to the road. In most cases these areas are developed.

Within the Studio Road area there exist parcels of land on which development may be suitable (from a slope standpoint). The areas of less than 25% in steepness comprises approximately 60 acres.

Along Lilac Lane and within the Chatsworth Lake Manor area, slopes are generally very steep and only limited in-fill development is possible. In most cases within these two locations existing development occupies the gentler sloping areas.

2. Geology/Seismic

The geologic classification of the bedrock underlying the Study Area is known as Cretaceous Marine Chico formation. The formation runs northeast-southwest with dips (downward inclinations of the layers) bedding to the northwest. Stratigraphic units or layers of bedrock are principally sandstone, claystones, and shale. It is due to the erosion resistive sandstones that large knolls and isolated large boulders are present. Also attributable to this erosion resistive sandstone is the lack or sparcity of soil forming a mantle over the bedrock.

The principal geologic concerns are adverse dip conditions on the north facing slopes, rock falls, difficult excavation, and ineffectual soil percolation conditions for septic systems (see "Sanitation" section of this report).

Adverse dip conditons are likely to exist on any newly constructed roadways. The general dip of the bedding would allow the safe construction of 2:1 roadway slopes on both south and north facing cut slopes, but any deviation to a steeper north facing slope would result in potentially unstable slopes. This would reduce any design flexibility. In some cases buttressing and other special design consideration may also be necessary. In all cases, however, reports prepared by a Certified Engineering Geologist will be necessary.

Rock falls would also pose a significant hazard. Although this hazard may be mitigated by rock removal, in most cases the process would be costly and potentially hazardous.

Also increasing the cost of developemnt is the high density of the bedrock. It is likely that blasting would be necessary to economically grade roadways and building pads. Special excavation equipment would be needed where blasting is not necessary.

The geology adversely affects the suitability of individual sewage disposal system (ISDS) in two ways. First, much of the Study Area is underlain by sandstone of low permeability and porosity. Consequently, septic system disposal is restricted to relatively limited soil zones, and the beds of mudstone and shale. The area that can support systems is thus limited and may require special design. Second, the shale layers are fractured and create a potential conduit to groundwater or to slopes near the ISDS. To avoid such a health hazard, a filtering system would be needed for affected areas. Since these conditions will vary from site to site ISDS system designs would require complex analysis for even large lot development. ISDS systems will pose a significant limitation to future development. (See "ISDS" discussion under "Sanitation" section of this report.)

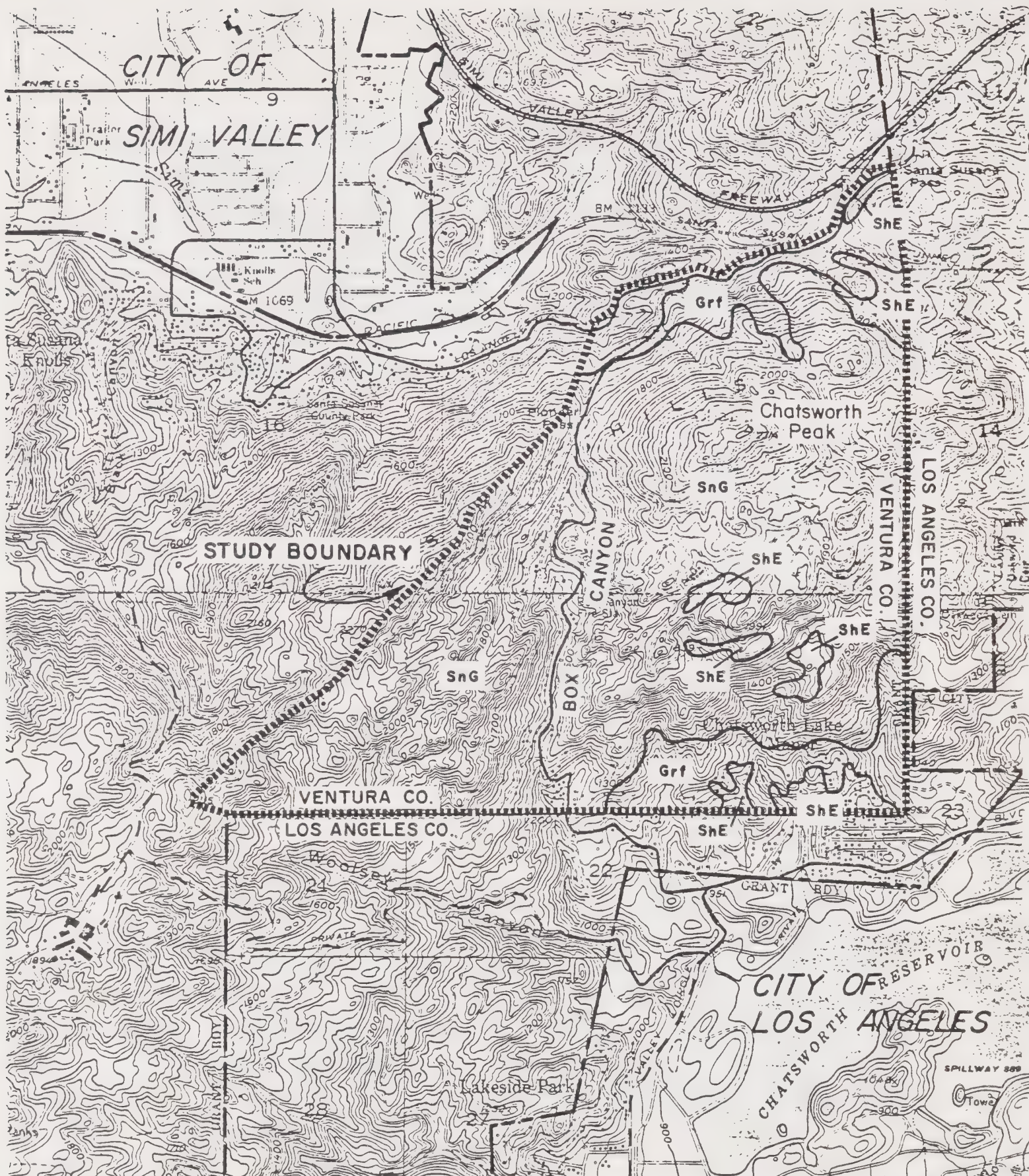
Two fault systems trend through this area. One fault system follows Box Canyon Road, and the other fault system generally trends along Santa Susana Pass Road. Both of these faults are currently considered to be inactive, based upon very limited available information. Although these faults do not appear to pose a significant seismic hazard, the Santa Susana/San Fernando, San Andreas, and other regional faults do. A lateral acceleration or side force between .2g (.2 times the force of gravity) and .3g or more could be expected within this area. This is comparable to the rest of Southern California.

Finally, seismicity within the Study Area will be a significant concern within the lifetime of any development. Normal wood-frame construction has been shown to perform well under like seismic conditions, although eccentric or irregular loading must be avoided.

Most geologic and seismic concerns related to development within the Study Area can be met via requirements imposed by required engineering geology reports and strict adherence to Building Code provisions.

3. Soils

There are three different soil types within the Study Area, all of which belong to the Sedimentary Rock Land - Gaviota Association which is described as follows by the USDA Soil Survey for the Ventura Area: "Moderately steep to very steep, excessively drained rock land and well-drained sandy loams that are shallow over sandstone." Figure 9 is a map showing the location of the soil types within the Study Area.



GENERALIZED SOIL MAP

CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY AREA



The three soil types are described as follows:

Saugus Sandy Loam (ShE) - Sandy Loam 48 to 60 inches deep over sandstone or shale; 5 to 30% slope. Approximately 10% of the Study Area has this soil type.

Sedimentary Rock Land (SnG) - Sedimentary rock land; steep mountainous areas of sandstone and shale covered with a thin mantle of soil; steep to very steep slopes. Approximately 70% of the site has this soil type.

Gaviota Rocky Sand Loam (GrF) - Rocky sandy loam 8 to 20 inches deep over sandstone; 15 to 50% slope. Approximately 20% of the Study Area has this soil type.

All three soil types have "severe" limitations as applied to the use of septic system filter fields. For more information on soil characteristics related to septic systems, please refer to the "Sanitation" section of this study.

4. Flooding/Drainage

The principal drainage courses within the Study Area are Box Canyon Creek to the south, and a series of small drainage courses to the north, northeast, and southeast. Box Canyon Creek is cut so deeply into the bedrock, that during flood conditions the water will not spill over its banks. Therefore, it does not impose a major hazard to existing homes. Some drainage improvements will be necessary in order to develop portions of the Study Area that require access across Box Canyon Creek. Concentration of drainage may also occur along new roadways and may dictate the need for further improvements.

Drainage and flood hazard is not a major constraint to development of the Chatsworth Peak Area although specific improvements may be required at time of permit issuance to ensure stability and erosion control.

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C. DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

1. Fire Services

Fire protection for the site is provided by the Ventura County Fire Protection District. Primary response to the Study Area is from County Fire Station No. 43 located at 1262 Cypress Street in the Santa Susana Knolls area or from Los Angeles County Fire Department Station No. 75 located at 2310 Lake Manor Drive in Chatsworth.

According to the Ventura County Fire District there are 4 concerns with fire protection within the Study Area: high fire hazard area; fire service response time; adequate water distribution for fire protection; and adequate access.

High Fire Hazard: The Ventura County Fire District considers the Study Area to be a High Fire hazard area, primarily due to the area being covered with natural brush and grass which, in dry conditions, ignites easily and burns rapidly. The hazard is compounded by the Study Area being adjacent to very large pieces of undeveloped land with the same conditions, possibly allowing fires started out of the Study Area to burn into the Study Area.

With increased development activity there is a greater probability of human caused fires due to accident, negligence or arson. Also, with a greater number of structures, there is a greater probability of damage to structures.

The only available mitigation measures available to lessen the hazard are: 1) compliance with building code standards pertaining to fire hazard (it is presumed that this is being done and therefore no additional costs or staff time would be needed for implementation); and 2) establishment of a buffer zone of fire retardant plant materials surrounding areas of development.

Regarding the buffer zone, there are no potential subdivisions from which to extract such improvements and so, the cost would have to be borne by the county or by the residents of the Chatsworth Peak area. Irrigation and maintenance of the buffer zone would have to be provided for via a private organization e.g., a home-owners association.

Costs associated with such buffer zones are as follows:

The costs associated with installation of fire retardant buffer zones can be grouped into two categories: 1) grubbing or old vegetation removal (done either by hand or heavy equipment depending on site conditions and extent of removal), and 2) hydromulching, the application of a seed mixture of fire retardant plants.

Grubbing costs ³ for heavy brush.....	\$.058 to .095 sq. ft.
Hydromulching ⁴ (fire retardant plans).....	\$.05/sq. ft.
Total.....	\$.108 to .153/sq. ft.

Therefore, the costs would be from \$4,700 to \$6,300 per acre.

Fire Service Response Time: Fire service response to the Study Area is provided by Ventura County Station No. 43 or Los Angeles County Station No. 75 depending on where in the Study Area the call originates, and the type of services needed.

Los Angeles County and Ventura County have a mutual aid agreement whereby, Los Angeles County will respond with emergency services to calls within Ventura County. However, this response agreement is of some concern to the Ventura County Fire District officials because the area is not of primary concern to Los Angeles County

Fire Department. Their primary responsibilities rest in Los Angeles County, and they can only respond on an "as available" basis. Response times and call types are summarized below:

LOCATION	BRUSH FIRE	RESCUE	STRUCTURE FIRE
<hr/>			
Lilac Lane			
Primary	LACO ⁵ 8-10 min.	VCO 5-6 min.	VCO 5-6 min.
Backup	VCO ⁶ 5-6 min.	LACO 8-10 min.	LACO 8-10 min.
<hr/>			
Box Canyon			
Primary	LACO 5-7 min.	LACO 5-7 min.	LACO 5-7 min.
Backup	VCO 9-10 min.	VCO 9-10 min.	VCO 9-10 min.
<hr/>			
Chatsworth			
Primary	LACO 3-5 min.	LACO 3-5 min.	LACO 3-5 min.
Backup	VCO 13 min.	VCO 13 min.	VCO 13 min.
<hr/>			

There are no mitigation measures proposed or available to lessen this concern.

Adequate Water Distribution: The water system capacity in the Study Area is generally adequate for existing development with available volumes above the 1,000 gallons per minute (GPM) required for residential areas. The available flow is as high as 5,400 gpm in some areas. The only apparent problem is that of water line distribution in the vicinity of Webb Road in the Chatsworth Lake Manor area. At this location the flow is well below the 1,000 GPM (320 GPM). According to an official at Water Works District No. 8, no mitigation of this problem is available at a reasonable cost. The existence of the problem is caused by the location of Webb Road which is at the highest elevation within

that pressure zone, and the lack of elevation differential between the storage tanks and the distribution system⁷. Solution of the problem would require a pump and a new storagae facility which is not economically realistic for the three or four existing homes.

Adequate Access: The Study Area currently has 7 to 20 feet wide roads consisting of pavement, gravel, or dirt, many of which provide a means of access into the high fire hazard area. These roads, for the most part, are considered substandard and inadequate, and could currently impede fire equipment from performing effectively and efficiently. In some locations the current road conditions could possibly prevent total access of fire equipment to existing structures.

Current building requirements for access to property requires the property owner to provide an all-weather (paved or chip seal) access road to the building site. In some cases, depending upon the location of the building site, the property owner may be required to pave a road for a considerable distance off of the property in order to meet the requirements.

2. Water System

Water to the Study Area is provided by Simi Valley Waterworks District No. 8. The District was originally formed in 1974 by consolidating 4 small, existing districts operating in the area. In July of 1977 mangement and operation of the District was transferred to the City of Simi Valley.

Water for the Water Works District #8 (WW8) system originates from both underground sources as well as from import. The underground sources are pumped from wells in the Tapo Canyon area. Imported water is delivered to the District by the Calleguas Municipal

Water District (CMWD) which receives its water from the Metropolitan Water District. Over 85% of the water used by Water Works District #8 comes from CMWD.

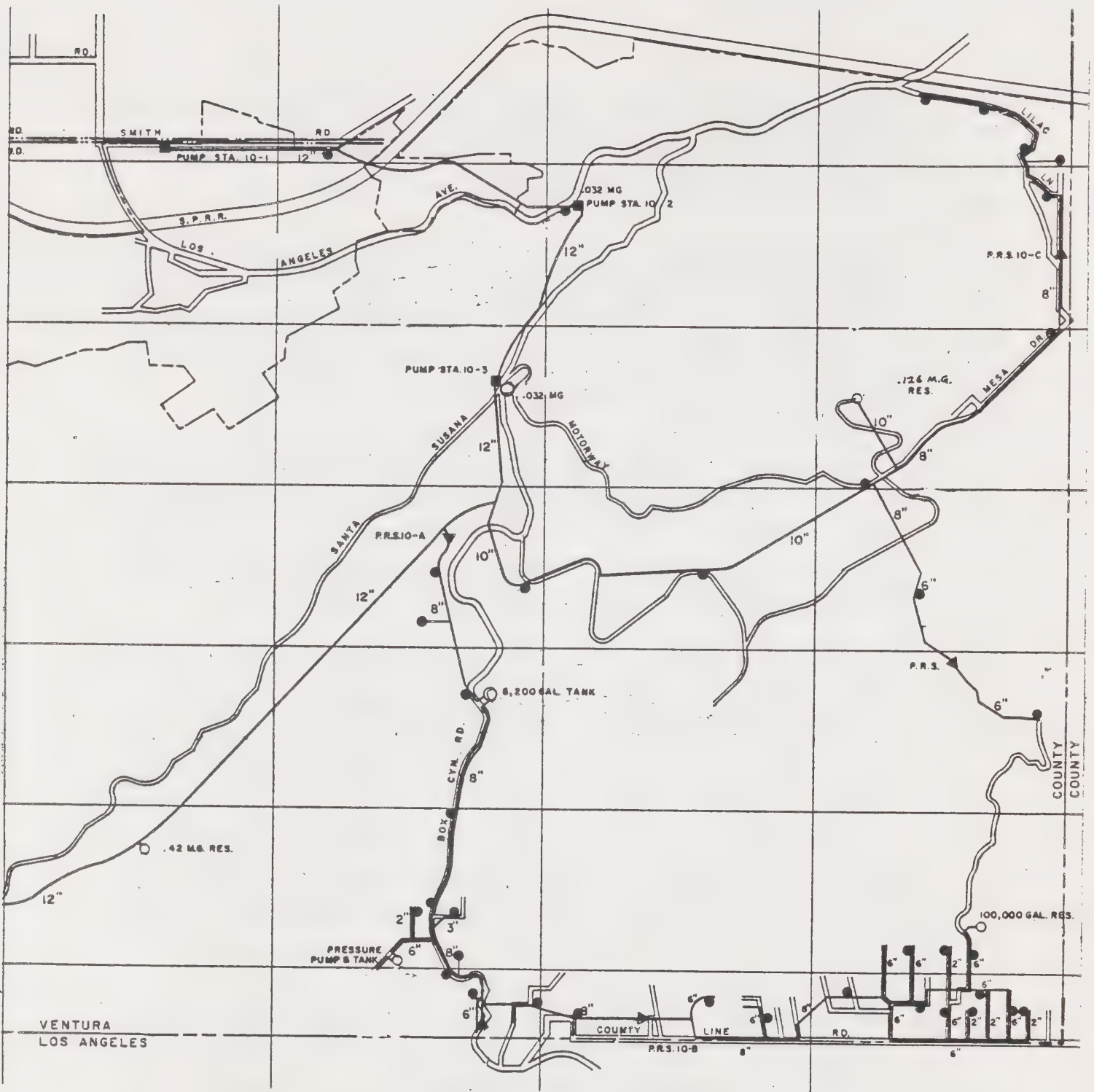
The Chatsworth Peak Study Area is part of one of three hydraulically separate water systems which are maintained and operated by WW8. The system serving the Study Area is identified as the Knolls-Box Canyon System which is further divided into the Knolls System and the Box Canyon System.

The Box Canyon System serves the entire Study Area as well as all of Water Works District #17 (WW17) which includes Bell Canyon and the Rocketdyne facility. WW17's service is via a December 28, 1977 agreement which sets forth how service is to be accomplished, volumes, and the necessary quantities for future growth.

System operation begins with a turnout from CMWD at Smith Road in Simi Valley. A series of three pump stations is required to deliver the water from the CMWD system to most residents within the Study Area. Since most residents are located on the other side of the hill from the pump stations, the water must be pressure regulated before customer use. These pressure regulating stations allow water delivery without excessive pressures that would otherwise be encountered as the water passes over and down the hill.

This system relies solely on the turnout to CMWD at Smith Road for water supply. A power outage in the area would require the system to operate from available water storage.⁸

Water storage for Ventura County Waterworks District No. 8 is provided for by twenty-five (25) facilities located at seventeen (17) different storage sites throughout the Study Area. These storage sites are distributed such that each operating pressure zone is provided with its own storage facility.



**PORTION OF WATERWORKS
DIST. NO. 8 DIVISIONS 3 & 4
WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM**

**CHATSWORTH PEAK
STUDY AREA**

- HYDRANT
- STORAGE TANK
- PUMP STATION
- ▲ PRESSURE REDUCTION STA.

SOURCE: W.W.D. NO. 8 CITY OF SIMI VALLEY JAN. 1984

SCALE 1" = 2000'

The Box Canyon system is served by three principal facilities located at Lilac Lane (.126 mg), Thompson Avenue (.1mg), and Rocketdyne (.42mg). These tanks have a combined capacity of 0.646 million gallons.

The facilities map provided by the District (Figure 10) indicates that water is pumped from Simi Valley via three pump stations, through 12 inch supply lines up to Pioneer Pass. From Pioneer Pass, gravity and a network of pressure reduction stations distribute the water to development along Box Canyon Road, the Chatsworth Lake Manor Subdivision, the Lilac Lane area, and the Studio Road area.

Currently the WW8 system is capable of meeting existing domestic water needs, with the only shortcoming being the lack of adequate pressure for fire flow in the Webb Road area. (See "Fire Services" Section of this report.)

Future development within the Study Area (other than very minor in-fill) will require substantial improvements to the water system.

Currently, the pumping system delivering water from Simi Valley to the storage facilities within the Study Area is operating at near capacity, and perhaps over capacity in dry, hot months. Each of the three pump stations consist of 2 pumps each with a total capacity of 2185 gallons per minute (GPM). The system is designed so that one pump will handle the required pumping and one pump will be maintained as a back-up. On May 10, 1984 (average day) the operational pump pumped water for 19 hours. The theoretical capacity would be 24 hours of pumping. If need arises, the back-up pump could handle additional requirements but this would eliminate the back-up system.

Of the pumping capacity of 2185 GPM (both pumps running), WW17 is entitled to 1880 GPM for service of Bell Canyon and the Rocketdyne facility.

Refurbishing of existing pumps and addition of a third pump at each station is an option for increasing the capacity of the Box Canyon System. These improvements would cost approximately \$150,000. WW8 is investigating the addition of these improvements.

WW8 is also investigating the possibility of a new 1 million gallon storage facility at an undetermined location within the Study Area. This would improve the water availability for fire suppression and would aid in domestic capacity for very short term "dry spells." The cost for this facility would be approximately \$600,000.

In summary, if the water system remains as is, development could only be accommodated on a limited, in-fill basis. Should both of the improvements identified above be installed, the system could accommodate a slight but undetermined increase in development.

3. Sanitation

Currently there are no sewer systems located within the Study Area. All existing dwellings are using some type of individual sewage disposal system to dispose of the sewage generated on site.

Individual Sewage Disposal Systems (ISDS): The Ventura County Environmental Health Division conducted a study of the existing condition of the individual sewage disposal systems (ISDS) in the Study Area. This report entitled "Draft Report: Box Canyon/Chatsworth Lake Annex Study" (February 1984) is herein incorporated as a technical appendix to this Study. This Report, however, stands as a complete and separate document.

The report identifies the problems with use of ISDS in the Chatsworth Peak Study Area, and proposes recommendations to assist in mitigating problems with existing systems. Those problems are discussed below:

Soils: The Study Area's geology and soils characteristics cause many problems with ISDS installation and operation. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Soils Report reveals the following information regarding the study area.

- o Slopes in the area range from 5% to 60% in steepness (a specific slope analysis performed by the County Planning Division, indicated that approximately 80% of the Study site is in the slope category of greater than 25% - see "Topography" section of this report).
- o Sandstone and/or shale bedrock underlie thin soil layers. Over the great majority of the site, bedrock is located four feet or less and, in some cases, as close as 8 inches from the surface. Filtration of sewage effluent relies on adequate soil depth.
- o More than 25% of the surface area consists of rocky outcroppings (no soil mantle).
- o The soil is too coarse to provide proper filtration and treatment of the septic tank effluent (see Soils/Strata section for discussion of soil types and descriptions).

Geology: One of the geologic characteristics of the study area is the shallow fractured bedrock which underlies the soil mantle. Sewage disposal into fractured rock can be of public health significance because of the rock's inability to properly filter and treat the sewage effluent. The proper functioning of an individual sewage disposal system depends upon the soil's ability

to filter and decompose the sewage effluent as well as remove harmful bacteria and viruses before the effluent reaches either ground or surface water. Rock fractures do not provide this treatment but rather act as pipes which can quickly conduct the effluent to the surface, downslope of the system, or into groundwater supplies. It is impossible to predict with any certainty where sewage effluent discharged into fractured rock will emerge. However, the result can be contamination of local water wells with harmful bacteria and viruses.

The Ventura County Flood Control District, Hydrology Division drilling records show at least 22 wells established in the Study Area. Records from the 1950's and 60's indicate that the groundwater has acceptable total dissolved solids and nitrate levels for drinking purposes. The number of wells drilled would indicate a good supply of available groundwater. A field survey by the Environmental Health Division staff in January 1984, confirmed that many of these wells are still being used by local residents. According to the Hydrology Division, these wells draw water from various levels in the rock strata. The potential problem is that the rock fissures will conduct untreated sewage to one or more wells in the area thus, contaminating them with harmful bacteria and viruses. This problem would be most prevalent in areas of high density (i.e., areas where houses are built very close together). Although no actual testing of the Study Area wells has been done, the geologic conditions and abundance of water wells make it highly probable that contamination has occurred and will continue to be a problem. Well water quality can also be affected by nitrate and surfactant pollution from the untreated sewage, making the water essentially unusable. Further study on well water quality and use is needed to assess the full extent of the problem.

Topography: Steep slopes encountered in much of the Study Area represent problems for septic systems. Leach lines and seepage pits must be placed progressively deeper as slopes increase, so as to maintain the minimum setback requirements from the slope surface. The purpose of the setback is to prevent effluent "daylighting" farther down the slope. The California Division of Mines and Geology report on this type of installation show that systems installed on slopes grater than 20% have a high probability of failure (i.e., sewage daylighting downhill) regardless of burial depth. Also, slope stability may be adversely affected when sewage effluent is allowed to percolate in certain soil and rock formations.

System Failure: The ability of soil to absorb the sewage effluents is important to the overall process of sewage disposal through individual systems. In areas with an extensive zone of porous soil, septic tank effluents may be absorbed for 10 to 12 years without failure. Areas with fractured rock and associated shallow soil mantles, such as the Study Area, have only a limited ability to absorb sewage effluents. This leads to an extremely short system life.

The basis of a particular material's ability to absorb water is particle size and space between particles. Generally, fine soils (i.e., clay, silt or sand) have more particle surface area and total water storage space between particles than an equal volume of coarse soil (i.e., gravel, rock, etc.). Therefore, fine soils can absorb and store more water than coarse soil because there is more surface area for the water to cling to, and more total space for the water to occupy. It is this water absorption and storage ability in fine soils which also creates the best conditions for sewage filtering treatment.

Given the above problems associated with ISDS use in the Study Area, the Environmental Health Division has developed recommendations to aid in mitigation of existing problems. These recommendations follow:

1. Yearly surveys of the Study Area, including sampling of springs and wells, should be done during rainy seasons. These samples should be analyzed for nitrate and surfactant levels.
2. Surveillance of septic tank pumping activity should be initiated in cooperation with the L.A. County Health Department to ensure that accurate records of pumpings in the area are maintained. L.A. County based septic tank pumping firms should be reminded of the requirements for permits and accurate reporting of pumpings done in Ventura County.
3. The Study Area's property owners should be notified of the proper maintenance procedures for septic systems.
4. Continued enforcement of individual sewage disposal systems, and land use policies and ordinances to prevent further degradation of systems in the Study Area.
5. Initiate review and identification of technologies which provide effective onsite treatment of sewage under these conditions.
6. Initiate and conduct activities to identify and delineate groundwater concerns within the Study Area. Identify specific groundwater uses and sewage disposal practices which will protect these waters.

7. Relate septic tank recharge rates and housing density to the hydrogeologic capacity of the area. Dwelling unit densities and lot sizes should be developed which will allow adequate operation of onsite sewage treatment systems.

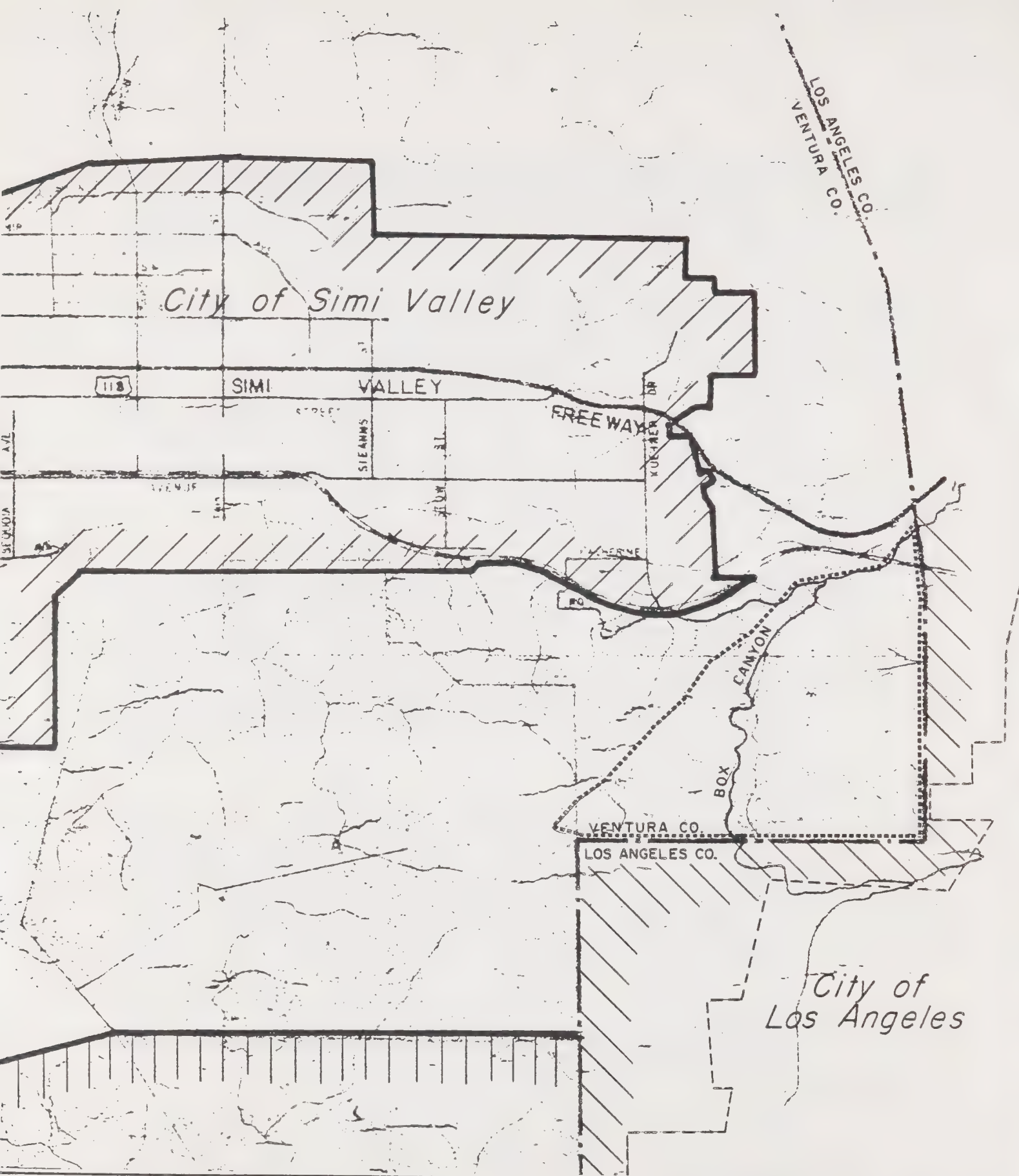
Costs associated with the implementation of the above recommendations are estimated in Appendix G.

The Report prepared by the County Environmental Health Division concludes that the best overall solution to ISDS installation, operation, and maintenance problems is the installation of a public sanitary sewer system.




Sanitary Sewer System: Currently there is no sanitation district serving the Study Area. The Simi Valley County Sanitation District serves the City of Simi Valley to the northwest; the Triunfo County Sanitation District services the area to the west and south, and Las Virgenes Municipal Water District and Los Angeles City serve the Los Angeles County and City areas to the south (see Figure 11).

Since the geographic orientation of the Study Area is toward the San Fernando Valley and the area is within the Chatsworth Watershed, it is logical that sewage generated by the area would be collected and treated in that watershed. The Las Virgenes Municipal Water District serves the unincorporated Los Angeles County portion of land south of the Study Area. Approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south of the Ventura/Los Angeles County line is the Los Angeles City Limits, within which Los Angeles City has responsibility for the collection and treatment of sewage.

These two districts would ultimately be involved in the collection and treatment of sewage generated within the Study Area. An alternative would be an expensive system which would have pump the



SANITATION DISTRICTS MAP

-  SIMI VALLEY COUNTY SAN. DIST.
-  TRIUNFO COUNTY SAN. DIST.
-  LAS VIRGINES MWD

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SOURCE: VENTURA COUNTY PLANNING DIVISION JAN. 1984

CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY AREA



SCALE 1" = 2000'

Figure 11

sewage 600 feet vertically over Pioneer Pass so that it could drain into the Simi Valley watershed.

If a sewage collection system were to be built within the Chatsworth Peak Study Area, a sanitation district would have to be formed or an existing district would have to annex the area. This district would maintain the collection systems within Ventura County and negotiate with LVMWD and Los Angeles City for collection and treatment within their jurisdictions.

One scenario would be: sewage generated within Ventura County would be metered as it flowed into the LVMWD system. LVMWD would then transmit this sewage into Los Angeles City, along with sewage generated within LVMWD for treatment at the Los Angeles City Hyperion Treatment Plan and the newly constructed Donald C. Tillman Wastewater Treatment Plan. Los Angeles City would charge LVMWD treatment costs, of which Ventura County would pay a proportionate amount based on the meter readings at the County line vs the total delivered into the Los Angeles City system.

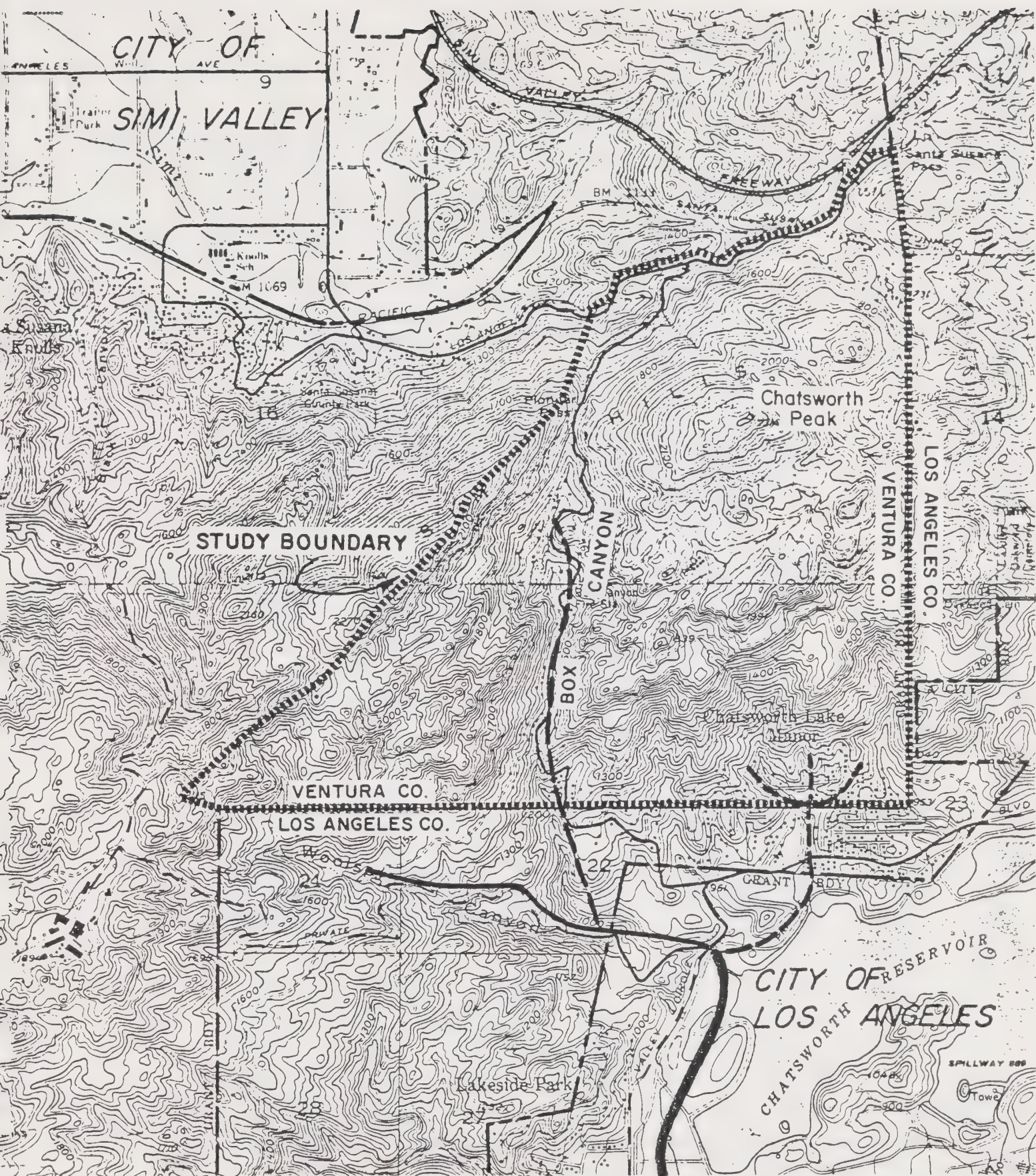
According to the Los Angeles City sanitation officials⁹, adequate capacity exists at the treatment plants for treatment of sewage generated in the Study Area.

The only existing sanitation facilities in the area is a City of Los Angeles sewer trunkline 24 inches in diameter traversing the Chatsworth Reservoir property and terminating at the point of intersection of Valley Circle Boulevard and Woolsey Canyon Road¹⁰. From this point Los Angeles City has an eight inch interceptor line running west parallel to Woolsey Canyon Road to the City limits. From the City limits LVMWD has continued the 8 inch line westward in Woolsey Canyon to serve two mobile home parks containing approximately 375 units¹¹. The line extends west as far as the westernmost mobile home park.

Within the Study Area only the Box Canyon Community and the Chatsworth Lake Manor Area are suitable for installation of a sewer system. The Lilac Lane area is too far removed to benefit, and the Studio Road area, while possibly able to connect to the Box Canyon System at a later date, is too far removed to be cost effective. The remainder of the Study Area is developed too sporadically.

Due to the intervening topography and general topographic setting of the Chatsworth Lake Manor Subdivision vs the Box Canyon Rural Community area, two separate systems are required in order to serve both areas.

A system serving the Chatsworth Lake Manor Subdivision would require extending a sewer line from Valley Circle Drive and Woolsey Canyon Road, north to the Ventura County Line to a point near Thompson Lane. A system serving Box Canyon would require a sewer line from the Woolsey Canyon collector line, north to the Ventura County line to a point near Box Canyon Road (see Figure 12).



BOX CANYON / CHATSWORTH SEWERS

- L.A. CITY TRUNKLINE
 - WOOLSEY CANYON INTERCEPTOR LINE
 - NEW COLLECTION SYSTEM (GENERALIZED)
- SOURCE: VENTURA COUNTY PLANNING DIVISION JAN. 1984 46

CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY AREA



SCALE 1" = 2000'

Figure 12

Costs associated with the installation of the two sewer systems are estimated follows:

Box Canyon System		\$295,800
Woolsey Canyon Interceptor to County		
Line	\$.126,000	
4000' of 8" VCP @		
\$16.00/L.F..	\$.64,000	
10 manholes @ \$2000.00/		
manhole	\$.20,000	
Engineering costs plus		
contingency @ 25%	\$.21,000	
Acquisition Costs (row) @ 25%	\$.21,000	
Box Canyon Collection System	\$.169,800	
5200' of 8" VCP @ \$16.00/L.F.	\$.83,200	
15 manholes @ \$2000/manhole	\$.30,000	
Engineering costs plus		
contingency @ 25%	\$.56,600	
Chatsworth Lake Manor System.		\$179,100
Valley Circle Bl to County Line	\$.98,100	
3100' of 8" VCP @ \$16.00/L.F.	\$.49,600	
8 manholes @ \$2000/manhole.	\$.16,000	
Engineering costs plus		
contingency @ 25%	\$.16,250	
Acquisition costs (row) @ 25%	\$.16,250	
Chatsworth Collection System	\$.81,000	
2500' of 8" VCP @ \$16.00/L.F.	\$.40,000	
7 manholes @ \$2000/manhole.	\$.14,000	
Engineering costs plus		
contingency @ 25%	\$.13,500	
Acquisition costs (row) @ 25%	\$.13,500	

NOTE: These estimates do not include the cost of formation of an Assessment District, County Service Area, or Community Services District as a method of financing and maintenance, or the cost of annexation to, or formation of a sanitation district.

Assuming (conservatively) that 50% of the lots in each of the areas are unbuildable due to topography, access, geology or other reasons, the costs for each lot would be as follows:

Box Canyon

o Estimated number of lots	=	207 lots
o 50% unbuildable	=	104 buildable lots
o Capital costs of system divided by 104 lots (295,800 ÷ 104)	=	\$2,837/lot
o Hook-up costs	=	\$1,100/lot
o Abandonment of septic system and on site installation and plumbing	=	\$1,000/lot
TOTAL*		\$4,937/lot

Chatsworth System

o Estimated number of lots	=	345 lots
o 50% unbuildable	=	173
o Capital costs of system divided by 173 lots (179,100 ÷ 173)	=	\$1,035/lot
o Hook-up costs	=	\$1,100/lot
o Abandonment of septic system and on site installation and plumbing	=	\$1,000/lot
TOTAL*	=	\$3,135/lot

*Not including cost of annexation or financing mechanism.

The above figures are very speculative and cursory. For this reason, an additional analysis of a sewer system design located in an area of similar lot sizes, topography, and capital requirements, is appropriate.

A public sanitary sewer system for the Santa Susana Knolls area of Ventura County is currently in the design stages. The system was necessitated by a health hazard resulting from improperly functioning septic systems which caused the imposition of a moratorium on new individual sewage disposal systems by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board. As a result of

there being a health hazard, the area qualified for 87.5% Federal and State assistance in funding the project. The cost per lot including the Federal and State funding approximately is \$4,900 for developed lots and \$2,600 for vacant lots. Extrapolating the costs for non-participation of the Federal and State governments (as would be the case for the Chatsworth Peak Study Area), the figures are approximately \$12,400 for developed lots and \$9,200 for vacant lots.

NOTE: The figures for the Santa Susana Knolls sewer project are estimates (as of April 1984). Final costs to owners will be the actual construction costs.

Sewer Financing and Maintenance Options: Establishment and maintenance of a public sanitary sewer system can occur via different approaches:

Subdivision: The most common means of establishing a sewer system for an area is via improvements required for approval of a subdivision map. This approach assumes that there is raw land to subdivide. Most of the land within or directly adjacent to existing development areas in the Study Area are subdivided; therefore, there exists little opportunity to secure improvements (sewers) through the subdivision process.

County Service Area (CSA): County Service Areas (CSAs) are organizational mechanisms for use by County Governments within the State of California. CSAs were created by State law (Government Code Section 25210) as an alternative means to meet the needs of areas which require extended governmental services. CSA law authorizes establishment of CSAs to provide one or more of the following types of extended services: Police protection, structural fire protection, local park, recreation or parkway

facilities and services, library services, and miscellaneous extended services. Miscellaneous extended services include water, sewer, pest or rodent control, street cleaning, street lighting, refuse and garbage collection, and ambulance services.

Extended sewer service includes acquisition, construction, operation, replacement, maintenance, and repair of sewage collection, transportation, and disposal systems including land, easements, and rights-of-way.

CSAs are initiated upon adoption of a resolution by the Board of Supervisors upon its own determination that the service is necessary or upon a request made by petition for initiation of a CSA. The formation of a CSA must be approved by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). (For more information on County Service Area Law see California Government Code Section 25210.1 et seq.)

Assessment Districts: The Municipal Improvement Act of 1913 and subsequent amendments from the Streets and Highways Code (Section 10000) authorizes municipal entities to create special assessment districts subject to prescribed procedures for construction of, and land acquisition for, new improvements.

Special assessments are not property taxes. They are levied only in cases where a property owner will benefit by expenditure of the special assessment. The apportionment of the costs associated with the new service is passed on to the property owners based on the theory of benefit which, simply stated, means that the property owner who gains more benefit will be assessed a greater portion of the costs.

The formation of an assessment district is initiated by petition of the people to the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). (For more information on Assessment Districts see California Streets and Highways Code Section 10000 et seq.)

Community Service District (CSD): A Community Service District is an independent district functioning much like a "mini city" in the provision of services.

CSDs have considerable flexibility in the types of services which can be provided and in the means of funding such services. They can be formed in order to consolidate existing services under one governing board, resulting in efficiencies and cost savings, or to obtain new or additional services which would be unavailable from other sources.

CSDs can be authorized to provide a wide range of services, including: water supply, sanitation, street construction, street improvement and maintenance, fire and police protection, undergrounding of utilities, parks and recreation, street lighting, and refuse collection. Most CSDs formed in California, however, provide only one service. Water, sanitation, refuse collection, and fire and police services are the most common services provided.

The formation of a CSD is initiated by petition of the people to the Board of Supervisors. (For more information on CSDs see California Government Code Section 61600 et seq.)

4. Access/Roads

Access to the Study Area from Ventura County (north side of Study Area) is via Box Canyon Road, south from Santa Susana Pass Road, and Lilac Lane, southeast from Santa Susana Pass Road. Access

from Los Angeles County south side of Study Area is via Box Canyon Road, north from Valley Circle Boulevard, and Lake Manor Drive, east from Valley Circle Boulevard then north along one of many north/south roads crossing the County line.

Box Canyon Road is a narrow two lane rural road with many abrupt, substandard curves. The roadway is approximately 19 feet wide situated within a 40 foot right-of-way. For most of the length of Box Canyon Road there are no shoulders to accommodate pedestrians, bicycles, disabled vehicles or on-street parking. Approximately 1100 vehicles per day travel Box Canyon Road, with approximately 200 vehicles per hour during morning and evening peak hours. Steep terrain on both sides of Box Canyon Road preclude any feasible improvement to the road to meet County standards.

Lilac Lane provides access to approximately 31 residences south of Santa Susana Pass Road. This roadway is a narrow, two lane rural road with abrupt curves. The roadway is approximately 15 feet wide within a 40 foot right-of-way. The road is paved for approximately one-half mile and is connected to Studio Road by a six to eight foot dirt road with abrupt turns and steep grades. Steep grades on the north side of the road and existing structures on the south side make it infeasible to improve Lilac Lane to any meaningful standards, beyond its existing condition.

Studio Road is a privately maintained road, extending in an easterly direction from Box Canyon Road in the central part of the Study Area and currently serves approximately 16 residences. The road is paved for a 10 foot width for approximately one mile. Studio Road is connected to Lilac Road by a narrow, dirt road with abrupt curves and very steep grades in some places. It does not appear feasible to improve this dirt road to an adequate secondary access road, given the physical constraints and the lack of access

easements. The approximate cost of improving Studio Road from 10 feet wide to 24 feet wide for one mile is \$100,000. An extension of the existing paved road for an additional mile to serve additional parcels would be approximately \$200,000 with minimal grading. Even with the above improvements, Studio Road would exist as a cul-de-sac greater than 800 feet in length, without an acceptable second access.

Thompson Avenue is a 12 foot wide paved County road within a 40 foot right-of-way. The length of the paved portion is 0.2 miles. Although, Thompson exists as a dirt road with very steep grades and extends northerly from the Chatsworth Lake Manor subdivision into undeveloped rugged land. Private encroachments into the right-of-way over the past decades and the abrupt, sharp turns in the road make it infeasible to improve.

The remainder of the Chatsworth Lake Manor Area is served by very narrow substandard private roads, many of which are not constructed within their easements, causing in some instances, property boundary disputes between owners.

In summary, the Study Area is served by a network of both public and private sub-standard roads, inadequate to provide acceptable access to existing residents (see Fire Service section for discussion of access for emergency vehicles). Further development within the Study Area without road improvements would exacerbate the condition. The financing and maintenance options discussion under the Sanitation section of this report would apply to street improvements.

D. DISCUSSION OF LAND USE PROBLEMS

Land use problems in the Chatsworth Peak Study Area can be grouped into four basic categories: illegal subdivisions; indentification of merged lots; surveying conflicts; and General Plan Conflicts.

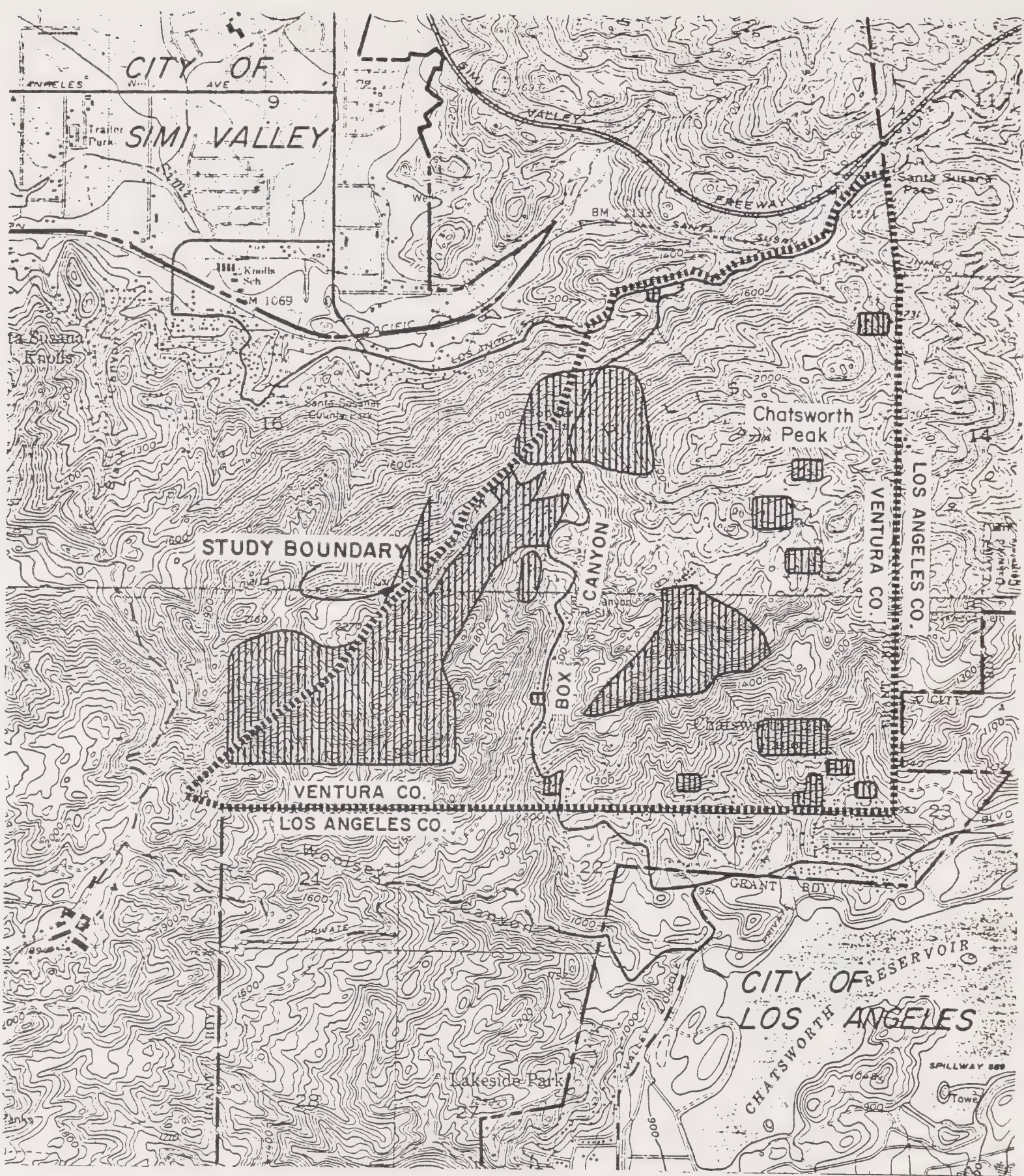
1. Illegal Subdivisions

There is much confusion within the Study Area as to which property or properties are considered legal lots for title and/or development purposes.

Appendix C is a public information item prepared by the County Resource Management Agency, Planning Division describing illegal lots.

An illegal division or illegal lot is one which was created (through various means) without having been formally reviewed and approved by the appropriate County agencies. All land divisions are governed by the State Subdivision Map Act and Ventura County Ordinance.

As part of this Study, the County Surveyor Division of the Public Works Agency was asked to determine the locations of possible illegal land divisions within the Study Area. This effort involved a cursory investigation of all Assessor's parcels, of which 1590 exist. Of this 1590 parcels, 36 were determined to be probable illegal divisions while the legality on an additional 61 parcels was undeterminable. Under the worst case scenario, a total of 97 possible illegal lots could exist. Appendix D is a listing of possible illegally divided parcels by assessor's parcel number. Figure 13 is a generalized representation of the locations of these possible illegal lots within the Study Area.



 AREAS CONTAINING POSSIBLE ILLEGAL LOTS

SOURCE : RESOURCE MGMT. AGENCY. BASED ON INFORMATION
 COMPILED BY THE SURVEY & MAPPING DIVISION
 OF PUBLIC WORKS. JAN. 1984

CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY AREA



SCALE 1" = 2000'

No building permit can be granted for a lot which has been divided illegally until such illegality is corrected. If and when the County has knowledge of a lot or parcel being divided in violation of the provisions of State Law or County Ordinance enacted pursuant thereto, the County will take steps to correct the violation. The process is as follows:

Once the violation is determined, the County will file a document with the Office of the County Recorder entitled "Notice of Intention to File a Notice of Violation." Upon recording the document, the County will send to the affected property owner by certified mail, a copy of the notice which will state a time, date, and place at which the owner may present evidence as to why such Notice of Violation should not be recorded.

If the owner successfully presents adequate evidence for not filing the Notice, the County will record a release of the "Notice of Intention to Record a Notice of Violation."

If the owner is not successful in presenting adequate evidence for not filing the Notice or if within 65 days of the property owner's receipt of the copy of the Notice of Intention he or she has not informed the County of his or her objection to the filing of said Notice, the County will file a Notice of Violation with the Office of County Recorder.

The "Notice of Intention to Record a Notice of Violation" and the "Notice of Violation" when recorded, shall be constructive notice of the violation to all successors in interest in such property.

Possible remedies to a lot for which its legality is not readily determinable, or which has been determined to be illegally divided are the Certificate of Compliance and the Conditional Certificate of Compliance.

The Certificate of Compliance is used in cases where the legal status is not known. A Certificate of Compliance is a document issued by the County which states that the subject parcel meets the requirements of the County's Subdivision Ordinance and the State Subdivision Map Act. A Certificate of Compliance is filed for record with the County Recorder's Office, and gives notice of a "legal lot status."

If the County finds that the parcel does not meet the provisions of the Subdivision Map Act and local ordinance (illegally divided), a Conditional Certificate of Compliance may be issued. A Conditional Certificate of Compliance is a Certificate of Compliance with conditions imposed. The conditions would be such as would have been applicable to the division of the property at the time the applicant acquired his or her interest. If the illegal subdivider is still the owner, current tentative map conditions would be imposed. A Conditional Certificate of Compliance is filed with the County Recorder's Office, and serves as notice that implementation of such conditions shall be required prior to subsequent issuance of a permit or other grant of approval for development of the property.

2. Identification of Merged Lots

Assuming that a property in question is part of a legally created subdivision, there still remains another factor which may prevent the property from being lawfully sold, leased, developed, or financed. This factor is referred to as "Merger." The term Merger is defined as the process by which two or more lots cease to exist as separate lots and combine into one lot. Merger ordinances are provided for by State law at local option. Ventura County has had a merger ordinance since 1965.

Two lots merge together when a number of conditions are all met simultaneously. For properties to merge the following conditions must all be met:

1. The lots are contiguous.
2. Any one of two contiguous lots do not conform to the minimum lot size standards prescribed for its respective zone or the Open Space Plan designation (whichever is more restrictive).
3. The lots are owned in whole or in part by the same person(s).
4. At least one of the lots is not developed with a main building, as opposed to an accessory building, for which a permit has been issued by the County or which was built prior to the time that permits were required therefore by the County.

Contiguous lots merge until all resulting units of land meet minimum lot area requirements.

Within the constraints of Ventura County Planning Division resources, the County records Notices of Merger with the County Recorder's office on all properties throughout the County which are known to have merged. It is important to note, that the recording of the merger notice does not merge the lots in question. The properties merge by operation of law at the time that all tests outlined above are simultaneously met. The Notice of Merger merely gives constructive notice to the public that the properties have merged.

The Chatsworth Peak Study Area contains several areas within which many lots have merged. The majority of these lots merged in March of 1965 when Ventura County enacted a merger ordinance pursuant to State Law (County Ordinance Code Section 8162-7; State Subdivision Map Act, California Government Code Section 66424.2). In 1965 the majority of property in the Study Area was zoned "R-E-1 Acre" or "R-E-20" which means that the minimum lot size for these zones is 1 acre and 20,000 sq. ft. respectively. Further mergers occurred when the County adopted the Open Space Element to its General Plan in 1973.

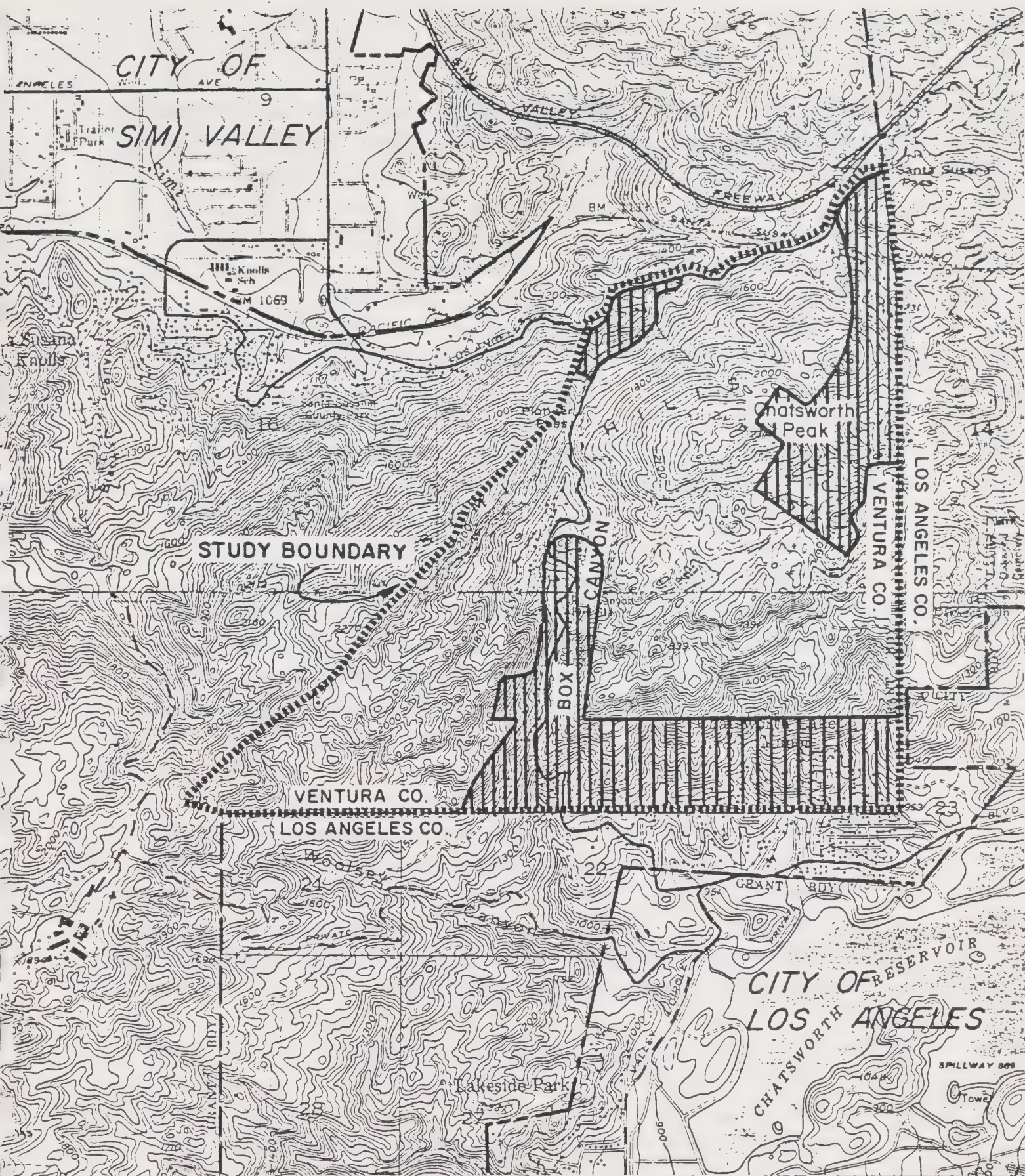
Figure 14 shows the locations within the Study Area which contain the highest number of merged lots. To date 11 property owners have had Notices of Merger recorded on their properties within the Study Area. The net result of these mergers is that 3036 previous lots are now merged into total of 81 lots. The great majority of these lots were very small ($25 \times 75 = 1,875$ sq. ft., or $25 \times 100 = 2,500$ sq. ft.) and were created in the mid 1920's prior to the stringent regulation of subdivisions.

The above recorded Notices of Merger do not represent a completed program of merger notification within the Study Area. There exist many more mergers which must be properly noticed. The County is now prioritizing the recording of Notices of Merger based on Assessor's Book and Page Number. All areas within the Study Area are scheduled to be noticed by the end of summer, 1984.

The County Planning Division has prepared an estimate of the total number of lots which exist within the Study Area. This figure is estimated to be 1,084 lots. This figure is not to be cited as the number of "buildable lots", as many of these lots are not developable due to slope, geology, access, and other constraints. This figure is merely an approximation of the number of legal parcels for which development could be considered. A breakdown of this number by location follows:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Parcels</u>
Box Canyon "Rural Community"	207
Studio Road Area	68
Lilac Lane Area	75
Chatsworth Lake Manor Area	345
Remainder of Site	389
TOTAL	1084

Maximum further parcelization of lots under existing land use policies is 117 lots (see Appendix H).



 AREAS CONTAINING HIGHEST QUANTITY OF MERGED LOTS

CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY AREA



SCALE 1" = 2000' Figure 14

Other areas within the County containing high quantities of merged lots include: Santa Susana Knolls, Ventu Park, Lockwood Valley, Lake Sherwood, and the North Coast.

See Appendix E for a public information item entitled "What is 'Merger'?" prepared by the County Resource Management Agency - Planning Division.

3. Surveying Conflicts

In the past, there have been some major problems caused by the inability to determine the accurate locations of parcel or lot lines. According to the County Surveyor's Office, problems are generally attributable to: 1) the standards for accuracy of surveying measurements in the 1920s (one part per thousand as opposed to today's standards of one part per ten thousand); 2) poor assumptions on the part of some of the surveyors in the 1920s (this especially pertains to the approximate 90° angle of the County line in the southeast portion of the Study Area - some surveyors have assumed this angle to be 90° when, in fact, it is not precisely 90°); and 3) poor mapping of the surveyed lines (these errors were of transposition of figures and/or poor checking of the information).

The disappearance of (or the difficulty of finding) adequate monuments along the County Line in the Study Area has compounded the surveying problem. In the past, monuments were occasionally disturbed, moved, or not replaced as a result of construction, grading, or cultivation projects. Consequently two different surveys may have used the same monument but in slightly different locations.

This problem has resulted in property line disputes and overlapping parcel situations where a portion of land is claimed on two different deeds. Surveyors are reluctant to perform surveys in this area due to the required acceptance of responsibility for the accuracy of the survey.

The County Surveyor's Office is currently conducting a survey of the County Line in this area, and replacing monuments as appropriate. In addition, the County surveyors are surveying the centerline of Box Canyon Road from the Ventura County Line on the south - north to its intersection with Santa Susana Pass Road. This will provide surveyors good control points for making future surveys in this area. These surveys are due to be completed, barring major unforeseen problems, late in 1984.

This surveying program (County line and Box Canyon Road) will not address prior surveying conflicts, nor will it determine private property boundaries internal to the Study Area. There does not appear to be any public program or money available for rectifying these private ownership disputes.

The only apparent means of rectifying the surveying conflicts and property ownership disputes rests with the property owners themselves or possibly some consortium of owners resolute on solving the problem. Any expenses incurred for new surveys or other settlements will be borne by the private property owners.

If a property owner(s) decide to address the problem several approaches are available.

- o Some form of assessment district could be established for the purposes of raising money to 1) retain a surveying firm to comprehensively address the problem of identifying and setting property lines according to new surveys based on the yet to be completed survey of the County Line and Box Canyon Road; or 2)

retain a firm for the purpose of aerially photographing the subject areas and creating new property lines based on occupation. This would have to be agreed to by the property owners and signed (approved) by the Board of Supervisors, as a new subdivision map would be created.

- o Property owners could use quit claim deeds as instruments to secure and fix property lines which have been agreed to. A Record of Survey should be recorded in order to give constructive notice to all parties of the existence of the newly established lines.
- o The lot line adjustment process is available to parties who have agreed to a particular line for separation of properties, and need only to have that line officially recognized. This process has some limitations. Appendix F contains the applicable code section dealing with lot line adjustments. Currently the fee for a lot line adjustment is \$250.00.

The use of a redevelopment agency for acquisition and resubdivision of property was investigated as an option for alleviating some property boundary problems, however, recent changes to State Redevelopment Law via Assembly Bill 203 (effective January 1, 1984), now requires redevelopment areas to be 80% urbanized or developed. This essentially precludes the use of a redevelopment agency in the Study Area.

4. General Plan Conflicts

As is noted in the "General Profile and History" section of this Study, the County's Land Use Element (Simi Valley General Plan) and Open Space Element are in conflict in the Lilac Lane and Studio Road areas. These conflicts arose when, in 1980, at the City of Simi Valley's request, the County adopted the City's General Plan for its Land Use Element in the Simi Valley Area of Interest. Several conflicts with the Open Space Plan have since been identified throughout the Simi Valley Area of Interest, including the two within the Study Area.

It is important to rectify these inconsistencies as soon as possible, so property owners in these areas will have an accurate assessment of development expectations.

A program for correcting these inconsistencies will involve a General Plan Amendment to either or both the County's Land Use Element or Open Space Element, depending on which residential density is deemed appropriate. This program should involve discussions between the City of Simi Valley and the County, and should not be limited to the Study Area, as inconsistencies have been noted elsewhere within the Simi Valley Area of Interest.

Options for addressing the inconsistencies between the plans are as follows:

- a. Do nothing - This option will not have any costs associated with it, however, it will allow for the continuance of an identified inconsistency between two elements of the County's General Plan. Until consistency is achieved, the more restrictive of the two elements would take precedence in a given area. Generally, this would be the County Open Space Element.

Staff time: 0

Calendar time: 0

Cost: \$0

- b. Simi Valley General Plan Change - This can be accomplished by changing the County's Land Use Element (Simi Valley Plan) to be consistent with the County's Open Space Element. The change would be from "Low Density Residential" to "Open Space" in the Lilac Lane area, and from "Residential Estate" to "Open Space" in the

Studio Road area. This option would require little, if any, environmental analysis and would not require any mitigation measures.

Staff time: 3 weeks

Calendar time: 3 months

Cost: Approximately \$2,300

- c. Open Space Element Change (Increase Density) - This option would recognize the Simi Valley General Plan designations for both the Lilac Lane area (3.0 Dwelling Units/Acre) and Studio Road area (1.0 Dwelling Unit/Acre). The consequences of this kind of change in the Lilac Lane area would not be severe, as there is very little raw land to further subdivide. However, in the Studio Road area there are approximately 60 acres of land with gentle or flat slopes. With a designation of one acre per lot, a considerable amount of subdivision could be accomplished (assuming physical constraints could be solved). Under County policies, taking into account existing ownership patterns, a theoretical maximum of approximately 60 new lots could be created. This would require fairly extensive environmental analysis and expensive mitigation measures (see report text).

Staff time: 6 months

Calendar time: 8 months

Cost: Approximately \$18,000

- d. Create new Simi Valley Area Plan - This option would allow the County to thoroughly study the Simi Valley Area of Interest, develop its own land use policies, and determine the appropriate land use densities for the Study Area as well as the remainder of the Simi Valley Area of Interest for unincorporated territory.

This alternative would require extensive coordination with the City of Simi Valley, and extensive environmental analysis (depending on the land use alternatives developed).

Staff time: 12 months

Calendar time: 12 months

Cost: Approximately \$36,000

Current staffing and budget allocations would not accommodate Options 3 and 4. Additional staff (possibly via extra help) and money would need to be appropriated.

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III. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions for this report pertain to the development potential or potential for an increase in land use intensity for each of the subareas discussed in this report.

The conclusion on water supply holds true for all sub-areas. Water Works District No. 8 is considering improvements to the water system which will improve both the storage and pumping capacity for the system. Until these improvements are funded and installed, the water system can only support development on a limited in-fill basis.

A. Box Canyon Community

The zoning and General Plan designations allow for development of any lot of record, subject to building codes, and subdivision of land to a minimum lot size of 20,000 sq. ft. This area was designated as a "Rural Community" in the 1983 update of the Conservation and Open Space Element and reflects the existing pattern and intensity of development and allows for continued in-filling at that intensity.

Constraints to an increase in development or land use intensity include:

Topography - There exist very steep slopes along the entire length of Box Canyon Road. The areas with gentler slopes or building pads already contain development.

Geology - Due to the high density of the bedrock, blasting could be necessary for the grading of roadways and building pads, adding to the cost of development. Due to adverse dip characteristics, roadway construction could require special design considerations such as buttressing, further adding to the cost of development.

Soils - The bedrock of the area is resistant to erosion and therefore there is a lack of soil or soil mantle which is necessary for proper sewage disposal and treatment. The nature of the bedrock (fractured) could conduct untreated sewage to groundwater sources.

Fire Protection - While Box Canyon Road, for the most part, is adequate for emergency vehicle travel, access roads from Box Canyon Road leading to structures are generally inadequate.

Sewage Disposal - The steep slopes and lack of adequate soil mantle combine to make individual sewage disposal systems difficult to install and maintain. In addition, the Ventura County Interim Sewer Policy, under which the County has been operating since 1972 requires 20,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size for new subdivisions when installing an ISDS. 20,000 square feet is currently the minimum lot size for the Box Canyon Community.

It does not appear economically feasible to install a public sanitary sewer system, as the costs on a per-lot basis would likely be as high as \$12,000+.

Access - Substandard roads serving as access to lots in this area would be difficult and costly to improve due to topographic constraints.

It does not appear practical or prudent to change the land use intensity in this area.

B. Chatsworth Lake Manor Area

The General Plan allows for development of any legal lot-of-record subject to building codes, and the further subdivision of land to a minimum lot size of 10 acres. Within this area there do not exist any parcels large enough to subdivide. The majority of parcels are less than one acre, with some as small as 1,875 square feet.

Constraints to an increase in development or land use intensity include:

Topography - The majority of this area consists of slopes over 25% in steepness. The gentler slopes, for the most part, contain development.

Geology - Due to the high density of the bedrock, blasting could be necessary for the grading of roadways and building pads, adding to the cost of development. Due to the adverse dip characteristics of the bedrock, roadway construction could require special design considerations such as buttressing, further adding to costs of development.

Soils - The bedrock of the area is resistant to erosion, therefore, there is a lack of soil or soil mantle which is necessary for proper sewage disposal and treatment. The nature of the bedrock (fractured) could conduct untreated sewage to groundwater sources.

Fire Protection - Roadways within the Chatsworth Lake Manor area are inadequate for proper fire protection. In some cases road conditions could prevent access of fire equipment to existing structures.

Sewage Disposal - The small lots, steep slopes, and lack of soil mantle in this area combine to make ISDS difficult to install and maintain.

It does not appear economically feasible to install a public sanitary sewer system in this area as the costs on a per lot basis would likely be as high as \$12,000+.

Access - Substandard roadways serving as access to houses in this area would be difficult to improve, since, in most cases, the roads are not located within their easements. It would require "taking" a portion of many properties in order to achieve this. In the case of Thompson Avenue, (a County road) many private encroachments into the right-of-way have occurred over the past decades making improvement of this road impractical.

Surveying Conflicts - Due to past problems with surveying accuracy, and the lack of ability of surveyors to precisely determine the location of the County Line in this area, many surveying conflicts have arisen. Property disputes, surveys which do not "close," and overlapping deed claims have combined to make it difficult to determine, with accuracy, the location of parcel lines in some areas.

It does not appear practical or prudent to increase the land use intensity in this area.

C. Studio Road

The General Plan allows for the development of any legal lot-of-record subject to building codes, and the further subdivision of land to a minimum lot size of 10 acres. Within this area there is a potential to create eight (8) additional lots.

Constraints to an increase in development or land use intensity in this area include:

Topography - Steep slopes on both sides of Studio Road make necessary improvements to this road costly and difficult.

Soils - The bedrock in this area is resistant to erosion, therefore, there is a lack of soil or soil mantle which is necessary for proper treatment and disposal of sewage. The nature of the bedrock (fractured) could conduct untreated sewage to groundwater sources.

Fire Protection - Studio Road, if improved to serve additional development would result in a cul-de-sac that is already greater than 800 feet in length, without an acceptable second access within a high fire hazard area.

Sewage Disposal: See conclusion on soils.

It is not economically feasible to install a public sanitary sewer system in the Studio Road area without there first being a system in the Box Canyon Community area to which to connect.

Access - See fire protection conclusion. This "cul-de-sac" issue involves emergencies of all types not just fire protection.

It does not appear practical or prudent to increase the land use intensity in the Studio Road area at this time.

D. Lilac Lane Area

The General Plan in this area allows for development of existing legal lots-of-record subject to building codes, and the further subdivision of land to a minimum lot size of 10 acres. Within this area there do not exist parcels large enough to further subdivide.

Constraints to an increase in development or land use intensity include:

Topography - Slopes along the majority of Lilac Lane exceed 25% in steepness making it difficult and costly to improve Lilac Lane. Existing development occupies the gentler sloping areas. The steep topography of the area would preclude any new access roads.

Geology - Due to the high density of bedrock, blasting could be necessary to grade for building pads and roadways.

Soils - The bedrock in this area is resistant to erosion, therefore, there is a lack of soil depth which is necessary for proper sewage disposal and treatment. The nature of the bedrock (fractured) could conduct untreated sewage to groundwater sources.

Sewage Disposal - The small lots, steep slopes, and lack of soil mantle in this area make ISDS difficult to install and maintain.

The Lilac Lane area is too remote from existing facilities to consider installation of a public sanitary sewer.

Access - Lilac Lane is a narrow, two lane private road approximately 15 feet wide. Steep slopes on both sides (and structures on the south side) make improvement of Lilac Lane impractical.

It does not appear practical or prudent to change the land use intensity for this area.

Based on the above conclusions, the following general conclusion can be drawn from the Study:

It is necessary for the County, in meeting State law, to apply the same improvement condition and development standards to the Chatsworth Peak Area as would be applicable to all other areas of the County.

Without the ability and commitment on the property owners' part to financially support the mitigation measures (e.g., adequate access, sewers, etc.) necessary to alleviate the constraints identified in this report, there is little reason to change the General Plan within the Study Area to allow for increased development. The extent and nature of the mitigation measures necessary for increased levels of development do not appear to be within the financial realm of individual property owners.

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CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY

NOTES

1. U.S. Bureau of the Census - 1980 Plus a net increase of six dwelling units since April, 1980.
2. Memo from Robert G. Branch, Treasurer-Tax Collector to Supervisor Dougherty, dated September 26, 1983.
3. John Innis - Local Landscape Architect
4. Captain Hickman - Weed Abatement - Ventura County Fire District.
5. Estimated response times by Captain Eric Ekeberg - Los Angeles County Fire Department.
6. Estimated response times by Captain Bellefontaine - Ventura County Fire District.
7. L.B. "Shorty" Darter - Waterworks inspector - Waterworks District No. 8.
8. Water Master Plan: Waterworks District No. 8, Wildan and Associates, May 1981, p. 4-4 to 4-6.
9. Fred Hoeptner - Los Angeles City Department of Sanitation.
10. Dennis Vanderhook - Los Angeles City Department of Sanitation.
11. Terrence O'Niel - Las Virgines Municipal Water District.

CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY

REFERENCES

1. U.S. Bureau of the Census 1980 Decennial Census Information for Study Area.
2. Ventura County Resource Management Agency, Planning Division, Building Completion Records.
3. Ventura County Assessor's Office, 1983 Assessment Rolls.
4. Real Estate Data, Inc., microfiche records of Ventura County Assessor's Records.
5. U.S. Department of Agricultural, Soil Survey Ventura Area. April 1970.
6. Ventura County Resource Management Agency - Planning Division, Conservation and Open Space Elements - Ventura County General Plan. May 1983.
7. City of Simi Valley, City of Simi Valley General Plan. March 1980.
8. Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District, Don Hunt (personal communication).
9. Wildan and Associates, Water Master Plan: Waterworks District No. 8 , City of Simi Valley. May 1981.
10. Simi Valley Waterworks District No. 8, Ben Pugay (personal communication).
11. Simi Valley Waterworks District No. 8, L.B. "Shorty" Darter (personal communication).

12. Ventura County Environmental Health Department, Draft Report: Box Canyon/Chatsworth Lake Annex Study. February 1984.
13. Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, Will Stokes, Chief Engineer (personal communication).
14. Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, Terrance Oneil - Consultant to LVMWD (personal communication).
15. City of Los Angeles Department of Sanitation - Sewer Division, Dennis Vanderhook (personal communication).
16. City of Los Angeles Department of Sanitation - Contracts Division, Fred Hoeptner (personal communication).
17. Ventura County Fire District - Santa Susana Station, Captain Bellefontaine (personal communication).
18. Ventura County Fire District, Memorandum of March 30, 1984 to Keith Turner from Fire Marshal Robert Holaway and personal communication.
19. Ventura County Fire District - Weed Abatement, Captain Hickman (personal communication).
20. Los Angeles County Fire Department - Station No. 75, Captain Eric Ekeberg (personal communication).
21. Ventura County Planning Commission, Chatsworth Study Area. April 1968.

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CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY

APPENDICES

- A. Box Canyon Rural Community
- B. Terms of Sale of Property at Tax Auctions
- C. "What is an Illegal Lot?"
- D. Possible Illegal Lots in the Chatsworth Study Area
- E. "What is Merger?"
- F. Lot Line Adjustment Ordinance
- G. ISDS Program Costs
- H. Parcelization of Lots

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BOX CANYON RURAL COMMUNITY

Location: Southeast of Simi Valley *

Prevailing Uses: Residential

Prevailing Zoning District: R-E (Rural Exclusive)

Prevailing Zoning Densities: 20,000 square feet and one acre

Parcelization/Ownership: Less than one acre

Recommendation:

1. Establish the area known as Box Canyon as a Rural Community, and in so doing;
2. Recognize the boundaries of the Community as the rural area depicted on the proposed Open Space Element map; and
3. Recognize the existing zoning districts and densities as they are presently applied to the land as the appropriate zoning for the community.

*In accordance with the policies applicable to the Rural Land Use Category of the Open Space Plan, some Rural lands are eligible for a "Rural Community" designation which would effectively recognize development patterns which would normally be inconsistent with Rural policies. The Box Canyon area is an example of this and therefore has been designated a "Rural Community" on the General Plan.

TERMS OF SALE

All lots or parcels of property are to be sold at public auction "as is" and in the order listed. The minimum bid shall be as stated per parcel, and each raise in bid shall be not less than \$5.00 per parcel..

The descriptions as given are based on the Official Records in the Ventura County Recorder's Office and are assumed to be correct; however, prospective purchasers are advised to examine the title and location of the lots or parcels to their own satisfaction prior to the sale. The County of Ventura makes no guarantee, expressed or implied, relative to title, location or condition of the lots or parcels for sale, nor for a clearance by the County Planning Department, pursuant to Section 8162-7, Ventura County Ordinance Code regulating the use of non-conforming lots, attached hereto. The purchaser may obtain a policy of title insurance on said properties at their own election and expense. However, it is emphasized that the sales of the respective properties are subject to conditions, restrictions, reservations and easements of record.

Payment by cash, cashier's check, or certified check in the amount of the bid awarded will be required at the time of the awarding of bid or immediately after the sale.

Cash or Credit Sale: Pursuant to Section 3693.1 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, the Tax Collector may make the sale a cash or credit transaction. "In the event the successful purchaser elects to treat the sale as a credit transaction, five thousand dollars (\$5,000) or 10 percent of the purchase price, whichever is greater, shall be deposited with the Tax Collector and the balance of the purchase price shall be paid in cash not more than 60 days from the date of the auction as a condition precedent to the transfer of title to such successful purchaser. Failure on the part of the successful bidder to consummate the sale within the period allowed shall result in the forfeiture of the deposit and all rights he may have with respect to such property."

Each successful bidder will receive a receipt which will state the Tax Rate Area and Parcel Number of the property purchased and the amount of his bid. During the auction or immediately thereafter, the successful bidder shall write the name or names and address as he wishes them to appear on the deed and how he wants the title vested:

1. Husband and Wife as Joint Tenants
2. As Tenants in Common
3. A Single Man
4. A Single Woman
5. A Married Man/Woman as His/Her Sole and Separate Property
6. Other (Specify)

He must then present this with full payment to the cashier, who will issue a receipt.

(SEE REVERSE SIDE)

APPENDIX B

Approximately three weeks after the sale, the deed will be mailed to the successful bidder. This tax deed conveys the right, title and interest presently vested in the State of California. The deed is recorded at the expense of the County of Ventura. In the case of a credit sale, the deed will not be recorded until the sale is completed.

The County is now required to collect the fee for documentary stamps from the purchasers of property, the fee being based on the purchase price.

\$.01	to \$100.00 - No Fee
\$100.01	to \$500.00 is \$.55
\$500.01	to \$1,000.00 is \$1.10, etc.

REV 1/82
TTC-150

OFFICE OF COUNTY TREASURER AND TAX COLLECTOR

VENTURA COUNTY ORDINANCE CODE

Sec. 8162-7 - Use of Nonconforming Lots

The use of land as permitted for the zone or sub-zone in which it is located shall be permitted on a lot or parcel or a combination of contiguous lots or parcels of less area or frontage than that required by the regulation of such zone or sub-zone only if the owner or, if there be more than one, any one of the owners of such lot or parcel or combination thereof does not own, in whole or part, any adjoining property and has not owned, in whole or part, any adjoining property since effective date of this ordinance. Whenever use of land is permitted pursuant to this section, the side yard of any lot may be reduced by not less than ten percent (10%) of the average lot width or three (3) feet, whichever is greater.

PUBLIC INFORMATION ITEM

WHAT IS AN ILLEGAL LOT ?



COUNTY OF VENTURA
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
AGENCY

PLANNING DIVISION

1. Q. HOW ARE LOTS CREATED?

A. The creation of lots is regulated by laws of the State of California and Ventura County. The creation of new lots is commonly called a subdivision and refers to the division of a lot into two or more lots.

2. Q. WHAT IS A LEGAL LOT?

A. In general, a legal lot is one whose creation was reviewed and approved by Ventura County agencies under the regulations in effect at the time of its creation or was exempt from such review. Those regulations include State Subdivision Map Act and the Ventura County Ordinance Code.

3. Q. WHAT IS AN ILLEGAL LOT?

A. In general, an illegal lot is one which was divided without having been formally reviewed and approved by the appropriate County agencies. In other words, the lot has been separated from a larger lot without approval.

4. Q. WHY IS THE COUNTY SO CONCERNED ABOUT MY "ILLEGAL" LOT?

A. State law requires that Ventura County, along with other counties and cities, regulate and control the subdivision of land to assure that streets, drainage, sewage disposal, water supply, fire equipment access and other requirements are properly provided for. When lots are illegally created, they lack these assurances.

5. Q. WHAT WILL THE COUNTY DO ABOUT MY ILLEGAL LOT?

A. The County is required by State law to notify the property owner whenever it knows of a possible illegal lot. It does so by recording a document called a "Notice of Intention to File a Notice of Violation" in the County Recorder's office. An office hearing is then held to determine if the evidence supports the fact that the lot in question was illegally created. If such a determination is made, a "Notice of Violation" is recorded in the County

Recorder's office. This document serves as constructive notice that the property has been divided in violation of the Subdivision Map Act and local ordinance.

6. Q. WHAT CAN I DO TO LEGALIZE AN ILLEGAL LOT?

A. You can apply for a Conditional Certificate of Compliance (CC of C). Issuance of the CC of C legalizes the lot for purposes of sale, lease or finance. The CC of C also identifies the conditions and improvements required before any development can occur on the property. The property owner is generally required to provide certain improvements (e.g. road, water) that would have been required had the property been legally divided. ALL CONDITIONS must be met before any development can occur on the property. CC of Cs are processed by the County Planning Division. The cost, timing and requirements are similar to legal land divisions.

7. Q. BUT THE PERSON WHO SOLD IT TO ME IS THE ONE WHO BROKE THE LAW; I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG. WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT?

A. In some cases it may be possible to void the sale and recover costs and damages. However, this is a complicated legal matter about which you should seek advice from an attorney experienced in land division law. People who knowingly engage in illegal subdivision activity are subject to prosecution within certain limits. The Planning Division refers such cases to the District Attorney's Office for action.

8. Q. MUST I FILE FOR A CONDITIONAL CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE NOW?

A. There is no legal requirement to file for a Conditional Certificate of Compliance. However, no development can occur until such a document has been recorded and any and all conditions met. Early resolution of the illegality is recommended.

9. Q. MY LOT IS SHOWN AS A SEPARATE NUMBERED PARCEL ON THE ASSESSOR'S MAP. WHY DO YOU SAY IT'S NOT LEGAL?

A. The State Attorney General has concluded that an Assessor's Parcel is not necessarily a legal lot of record. Assessor's parcels are created for tax purposes only and are not subdivisions of land. A single legal lot may be divided into several parcel numbers for tax purposes only. The Assessor assigns numbers to parcels for appraisal and tax purposes only. He is not directly involved in the process of approving subdivisions.

10. Q. WHAT WILL THE COUNTY DO ABOUT MY "ILLEGAL LOT?"

A. While it is illegal to create (through an unauthorized sale) or sell an illegal lot, there is no law against merely owning or purchasing one. Rest assured that Ventura County is in the business to try to HELP citizens. There are many innocent purchasers of illegally subdivided lots. All

that the County is now trying to do is assure safe and orderly development of these lots.

(805) 654-2494, or by writing the Planning Division, (Attention: Zoning Administration Section) at 800 So. Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009.

11. Q. WHY DIDN'T THE TITLE COMPANY TELL ME MY LOT WAS ILLEGAL?

A. Title companies only insure ownership and not how the property can be used or how it was created. They may ask the County for verification that a title transfer meets requirements of subdivision laws and ordinances. This has not been their common practice in the past.

12. Q. WHAT CAN A BUYER DO TO AVOID ACQUIRING AN ILLEGAL LOT?

A. Buyers or their realty agents can verify the legal status of a lot prior to purchase by contacting the Planning Division of Ventura County.

13. Q. WHOM SHOULD I CONTACT ON THESE MATTERS?

A. Property owners may contact County staff for information on legal lot status or the remedies available by phoning

CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY

PROBABLE ILLEGAL DIVISIONS - APRIL 1984

APPENDIX D

The following parcels have been noted as being probable illegal divisions of land.

<u>Book</u>	<u>Page and Block</u>	<u>Parcel No.</u>
649	070	14, 19, 28, 32, 33, 34, 35, 38, 39, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46
649	101	10
649	116	30
649	125	13, 14
649	133	11, 12
649	150	05
649	160	04
649	164	24, 25
649	180	04
649	185	26, 27
649	234	15
649	237	03, 04, 19, 20
649	250	04
649	255	07
649	303	07
649	310	05

<u>Book</u>	<u>Page and Block</u>	<u>Parcel No.</u>
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The following parcels were unable to be determined as legal.

<u>Book</u>	<u>Page and Block</u>	<u>Parcel No.</u>
648	05	05, 10
648	097	03, 15
648	098	03, 13
648	157	05
648	158	04
648	171	06
648	172	09
648	173	13, 16
648	174	04
648	200	04, 05, 07, 08
648	237	08, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16
648	240	03, 04, 09
648	270	26, 27
649	010	01, 04, 30, 36
649	020	02, 16
649	030	16, 17
649	130	01, 02
649	140	02
649	150	02, 03, 04
649	160	02, 03
649	200	01
649	202	16
649	220	01
649	234	13, 14
649	237	01, 02, 21
649	240	02
649	250	02, 03
649	260	01
649	300	01

Chatsworth Peak Study
Page 3

<u>Book</u>	<u>Page and Block</u>	<u>Parcel No.</u>
649	310	04
649	340	18, 20, 21

KTcmE71

PUBLIC INFORMATION ITEM

WHAT IS
"MERGER"?

APPENDIX E



COUNTY OF VENTURA
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
AGENCY

Q. WHAT IS "MERGER"?

A. "Merger" is the combining of two or more legal lots into one legal lot.

Q. WHEN DOES "MERGER" OCCUR?

A. Any two contiguous lots will "merge" at the moment all three following conditions are simultaneously met:

1) At least one of the lots is not developed with a structure;

2) At least one of the lots does not meet the minimum parcel size as established by Zoning or the Open Space Element of the General Plan and;

3) Both are owned in whole or in part by the same person or entity.

Q. WHAT ARE CONTIGUOUS LOTS?

A. Lots are considered to be contiguous if they share a common boundary or if they are only separated by a narrow strip (such as a road or canal) but can reasonably be developed as a single project.

Q. HOW DID THE COUNTY FIND OUT THAT MY LOTS ARE "MERGED", SINCE IT'S SUCH A LARGE COUNTY?

A. There are a number of information sources which lead to the discovery of "merged" lots. The County has specialists who are trained in title searching and other facets of determining "merged" parcels. The status of "merged" lots often occurs when a property owner seeks County permits related to development or change of use of the property.

Q. WHEN DID THE COUNTY ENACT THE "MERGER" ORDINANCE?

A. The County enacted its Merger Ordinance in March of 1965 (County Ordinance Code Section 8162-7). Thereafter, contiguous lots automatically "merged" whenever they simultaneously met the conditions listed above.

Q. CAN I STILL UTILIZE MY LOTS, EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE "MERGED"?

A. Yes. However, two or more lots which have merged into one will be treated as one lot only. For example, if the applicable zoning permits only one dwelling per lot, two vacant lots that have merged could have only one dwelling built on it. If one of the two "merged" lots already had a dwelling on it, no additional dwellings could be added.

Q. CAN I CONVEY OFF THE MERGED LOTS SEPARATELY?

A. No. Merged lots can only be conveyed together as one entity. If one of the "merged" lots is conveyed as an entity separate from the other lot or lots with which it has merged, the conveyance is an illegal subdivision.

Q. WHAT CAN I DO TO "DEMERGE" MY PROPERTY?

A. In some cases, lots which have merged can be separated again by a new subdivision of the property. Such subdivisions are regulated by State law and local ordinance.

Q. WHY DIDN'T THE TITLE COMPANY TELL ME MY LOT(S) WAS MERGED?

A. Title Companies only insure ownership; they are not required to comment on how the property can be used under the subdivision laws or the applicable zoning and General Plan designations. They may ask the County for verification that a Title Transfer meets requirements of Subdivision Laws, Zoning, and the General Plan. This, however, has not been a common practice in the past.

Q. WHAT CAN A BUYER DO TO AVOID ACQUIRING A "MERGED" LOT?

A. Buyers or their real estate agents can verify whether a lot has merged by contacting the Planning Division of Ventura County.

Q. WHOM CAN I CONTACT ON THESE MATTERS?

A. Property owners or their real estate agents may contact County staff for information on "merger" by phoning (805) 654-2465 or by writing the Planning Division at 800 South Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009.

Sec. 5211 - SUBDIVISION CREATING FOUR OR LESS LOTS - Except as otherwise provided in this section, a tentative map and a parcel map shall be required for all subdivisions creating four or less lots, or four or less condominiums, or (in the case of community apartment projects) containing four or less apartments, or (in the case of conversions to a stock cooperative) involving four or less dwelling units. The Advisory Agency may waive such map preparation requirements in the following cases:
(AM. ORD. 3647-4/26/83)

(a) Lot line adjustments, provided that the Advisory Agency has issued written findings that either (i) all of the resulting lots will conform to all applicable zoning, general plan and specific plan requirements or (ii) the adjustment is consistent with the public health, safety and welfare and will not cause a conforming lot to be made nonconforming with applicable zoning, general plan or specific plan requirements and will not reduce the area of any nonconforming lot by more than ten percent. In cases where the findings specified in clause (ii) above are made, compliance with the requirements of sections 8213 and 8241 of this Code relating to lot size and configuration is excused.

(b) Subdivisions (other than condominium conversions, community apartment projects and stock cooperative conversions) which contain only lots which are at least 40 acres or a quarter of a quarter section in size, or which are for the purpose of creating a water well site or sites each no more than 1200 square feet in size, or which merely recreate lots which have ceased to exist as separate lots by reason of merger, provided that the Advisory Agency has issued written findings that the proposed subdivision complies with all requirements as to area, improvement and design, flood water drainage control, appropriate improved public roads, sanitary disposal facilities, water supply availability, environmental protection, and all other requirements of the Subdivision Map Act and this Code.

(AM. ORD. 3647-4/25/83)

With respect to subdivisions which merely recreate lots which have merged, where one or more of the resulting lots will not comply with all requirements as to area but the subdivision otherwise qualifies for waiver of map preparation requirements, such map preparation requirements may be waived provided that lot line adjustments are processed simultaneously with such subdivisions so as to bring all the resulting lots into compliance with such requirements as to area, and provided, further, that map preparation requirements for such lot line adjustments are waived pursuant to this section.
(AM. ORD. 3647-4/25/83)

County of Ventura

MEMORANDUM

TO: KEITH TURNER

DATE: JUNE 11, 1984

FROM: LESLIE J. STUDER

SUBJECT: CHATSWORTH STUDY

These are the cost estimates for implementing our recommendations from the Chatsworth Study. They are very rough projections. In order to actively consider a recommendation, more detailed cost estimates should be made.

1. This is a monitoring program to detect levels of Individual Sewage Disposal System (ISDS) pollutants in ground and surface waters. Results would indicate effectiveness of ISDS program criteria and technologies. Environmental Health Department or County Service Area could conduct this survey.

Man hours	80hr/yr	=	\$3200
Lab costs	100 samples	=	\$ 500
	Total	=	<u>\$3700/yr</u>

2. Pumping frequency of a septic tank is associated with failed or marginal system operation.

This effort would provide a better overview of pumping activities in the area, indicating the extent of failed ISDS.

Man hours	20/yr	=	\$800
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3. Proper maintenance and repair of ISDS leads to extended system life, satisfactory system performance and prevention of health hazards and environmental pollution.

Man hours	80/yr	=	\$3200
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4. Continuing ISDS program activities at current levels, includes the Environmental Health Department (new system design, and complaints) the Building and Safety Department (repairs and inspections) and the Planning Department.

EHD Man hours	Approval New System (15)	=	60 hrs	=	2400
	Complaint (30)	=	90 hrs	=	3600
B&S Man hours	Repairs (10)	=	20 hrs	=	800
Planning			30 hrs	=	<u>1200</u>
					\$8000

5. Individual Sewage Disposal System technologies for low density communities that would be effective in the study area are available. However, the effectiveness of these systems is dependent on active monitoring and maintenance. A County Service Area would be necessary to provide these services.

EHD review of these techniques

240 Man hours

= \$9600

- 6 & 7. ISDS ordinances and policies relate to the protection of public health and environment. A better understanding of the area's hydrology would aid in identifying technologies and building densities which would allow for safe disposal of sewage.

Cost would be associated with consultants study and scope of work performed.

Unable to estimate.

CHATSWORTH PEAK STUDY
 PARCELIZATION OF LOTS - MAY, 1984
 APPENDIX H

<u>BOOK & PAGE</u>	<u>ESTIMATE OF EXISTING PARCELS</u>	<u>ESTIMATE OF MAXIMUM ADDITIONAL PARCELS</u>
648-04	10	0
648-05	8	0
648-07	11	0
648-08	17	0
648-09	25	0
648-10	22	0
648-11	38	0
648-12	81	0
648-13	46	0
648-14	9	0
648-15	27	0
648-16	16	0
648-17	19	0
648-18	15	0
648-19	2	1
648-20	5	0
648-21	14	2
648-24	9	6
648-27	14	17
649-01	28	17
649-02	16	1
649-03	10	7
649-04	8	5
649-05	9	2
649-06	8	0
649-07	29	4
649-08	21	0

<u>BOOK & PAGE</u>	<u>ESTIMATE OF EXISTING PARCELS</u>	<u>ESTIMATE OF MAXIMUM ADDITIONAL PARCELS</u>
649-09	11	0
649-10	43	0
649-11	61	0
649-12	22	0
649-13	32	0
649-14	10	0
649-15	37	0
649-16	42	0
649-17	4	0
649-18	21	0
649-19	3	0
649-20	30	0
649-21	2	0
649-22	27	0
649-23	20	2
649-24	16	0
649-25	17	0
649-26	2	0
649-27	39	0
649-28	27	0
649-29	10	0
649-30	21	1
649-31	23	0
649-32	25	0
649-33	8	0
649-34	14	52
<hr/>		
TOTALS	1084	117

KT:lp

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